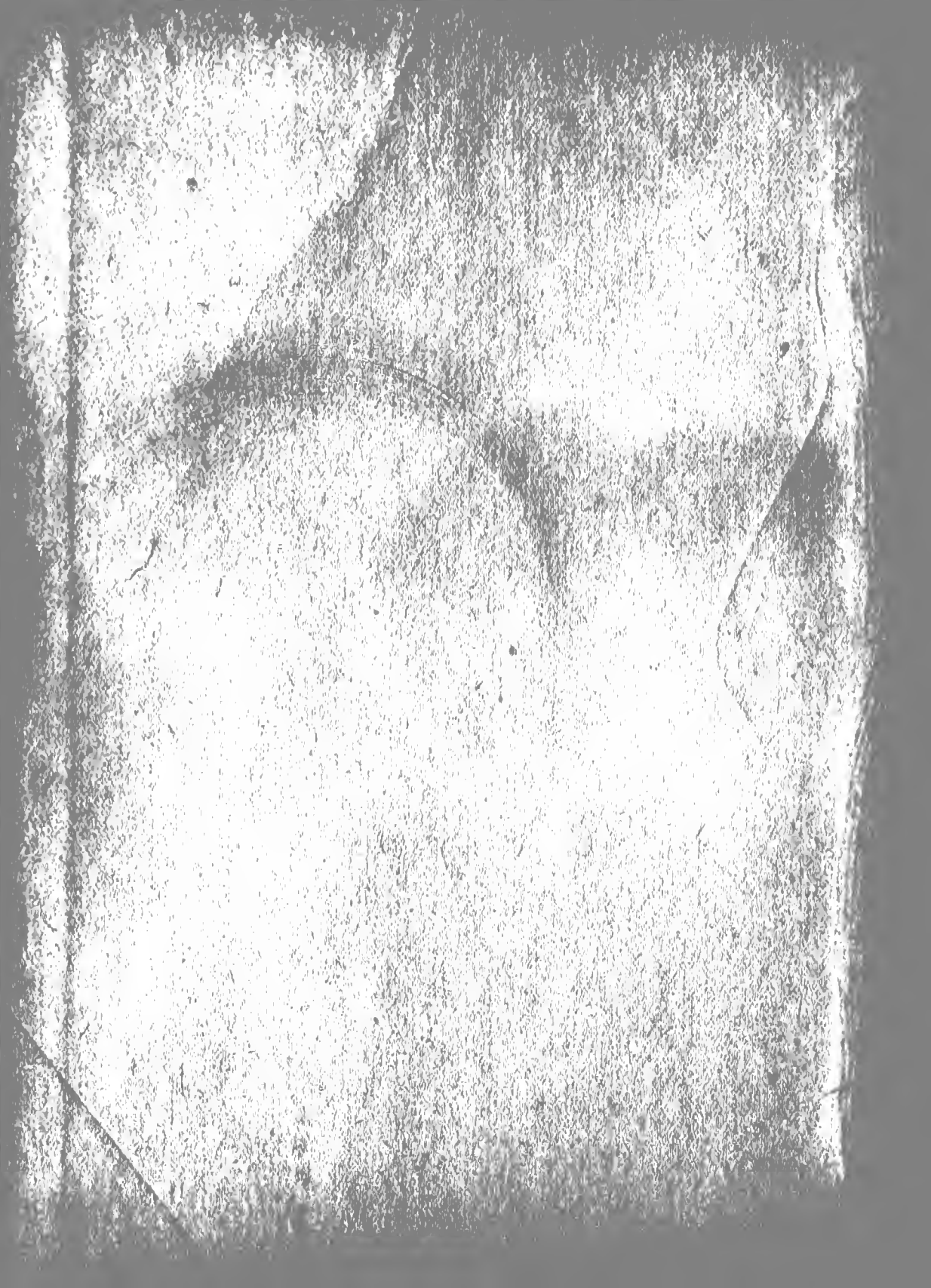




FISLEY AND B. TISTLETOE

BELEFORD-CLARK & CO.
CHICAGO.



W. B. CONKEY COMPANY
CHICAGO
PRINTERS AND BINDERS



HOLLY AND MISTLETOE.



BY
MARY ABBOT RAND.

FULLY ILLUSTRATED.

CHICAGO:
BELFORD-CLARKE CO.
1891.

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THE CHRISTMAS GRAB-BAG.



JOSEPHINE YEATON was her name, but three letters of it spell Joy, and that was what her friends called her. She was a rich, little girl. Her pleasant home held all the comforts that money could buy. It is a satisfaction to know that once in a while in stories there is a good, *rich* little girl.

The family consisted of a generous father, a sweet mother just fifty years old,—in her “year of jubilee,” she smilingly said. Then there was a married sister, Eliza, with her husband, the Reverend Mr. Titus. There was a young lady sister, Bella, just out of boarding-school; a middle-sized brother, Tom, of twelve years, and her own self, Joy, just ten. Then there were Martina, the Swedish cook, and Irish Norah, the second girl.

The winter holidays had gathered these same people year after year under the Christmas-tree, or about the well-filled stockings at the fireside. Now it was the day before Christmas, and little Joy sat

THE CHRISTMAS GRAB-BAG.

down with her dog Snap and her dolly to plan for the eve so near at hand. She made an unconsciously pleasant picture as she sat there in the garnet-cushioned chair, her brown hair lightly resting upon Snap's white fleece.

You see, being rich, she had missed the sweetness we poorer folks have of planning what to get, and especially how to get it. She knew nothing of the preciousness of gifts sorely longed for, and obtained at last only by a hoarding of penny by penny.

All Joy had to do was to tell papa how much she would like to spend for Christmas. So did each of the others. Then, for you know they were a *good*, rich family, most of this was given in charity one way and another. What was left they put into what was called "the family fund," with which mamma or the older sisters purchased what in their judgment they considered appropriate presents for all at home. These little gifts were usually quite inexpensive. There was not much surprise about them, nor very much of pleasure. No one of the family appeared to be in want of anything. Papa's purse was always open to any reasonable requirement. It was pretty well known every year about what would be received. This year, at any rate, Joy knew all about it, for she had been with mamma to make the purchases.

There were the usual slippers for papa ("and he has more now than he knows what to do with"), reflected



Joy. "There are the new glasses for mamma, the Concordance for brother-in-law, Mark Twain's 'Scrap-book' for sister Eliza, Mrs. Whitney's 'Hitherto' and opal ear-rings for Bella, a stout jack-knife for Tom. For myself, I know well enough mamma has bought a pound of caramels, which I shall pass to the others, as usual; and I saw papa stuffing a pretty purse for me to buy what I please with. I know they can't think of an earthly toy that I have not already got in this dear little nursery. Then there's a cherry tie for Martina, and a green one for Norah."

Upon these gifts little Joy pondered, considering if it were possible to have a little more fun than usual out of what had become with them a somewhat dull form. She submitted her plan to dolly, who made no objection. Snap twinkled his intelligent eyes, and barked approval. Now mamma's consent was to be obtained.

At first, the dear lady was shocked.

"Supposing, my dear, that Norah should get —"?

"And what would Eliza do with —"?

"All the more fun, mamma. Oh, do say yes! We've never, never had a downright merry Christmas."

"But the unsuitableness of it, my child."

"I am not so sure of that;" and the thoughtful, bright eyes looked earnestly in her mother's face. "Do you know, I think we may not be sure of

THE CHRISTMAS GRAB-BAG.

what people really are? We just guess at them by their age, or their position, or something of the kind, while we know very little what their real tastes are. I would like to give this world a good shaking up. You know the game called 'Boston?' All the players have a chair of their own, but when the leader says 'Boston, all around!' there's a grand rush, and each must take another's chair."

"And so you want to have 'Boston, all 'round' in this family? Well, my dear, you may; but I should be ashamed to have it known. People will surely think we have gone crazy."

Joy danced about as lightly as a stout little girl, with very big feet, could possibly dance.

"And it is to be a surprise, mamma, you know. That is the cream of the fun."

On Christmas eve, the Yeatons all came into the parlor after dinner, expecting to see the pretty, but familiar sight, of a lighted Christmas tree. But, instead, there was a large, stiff lace-bag of the material known by milliners as "foundation." Through this transparent receptacle various bundles of different sizes could be seen. Joy explained that the Christmas presents were to be taken from this grab-bag. Norah was to have the first choice, then Martina the cook. The Yeaton family were to follow, beginning with the youngest, and ending with Mr. Yeaton. The rules of the grab were very simple. The person

THE CHRISTMAS GRAB-BAG.

must first be blinded, then reach into the bag with the forefinger, and the first article touched would prove the allotted gift. The open texture of the bag made it perfectly evident to all in the room, but the person most concerned, which was the package touched.

Norah, having been blinded, was led to the bag and ventured a finger as shrinkingly as if it were going into the mouth of a snapping-turtle. There was a general shout when she encountered the corner of Mark Twain's Scrap-book. Mrs. Yeaton glanced toward Joy with dismay. There was an unspoken "I told you so," in her expression. But you should have seen Norah's face when the use of the volume was explained to her. "Scrap-book, is it, mem? Me own? Indade, thin, I've a use for it. Haven't I ben kapin' ivery blessed bit of po'try that I could find in any owld paper. Many's the song they've sung to me. I'll just be afther showin' yez, mem." Diving into the kitchen for a minute, Norah reappeared with a roll of paper-scrap, from which she eagerly produced such gems as Longfellow's "Rainy Day," Lucy Larcom's "Hannah at the Window Binding Shoes," Miss Kimball's sweet little "Crickets," and others.

Mrs. Yeaton's eyes somehow had become dim enough to need the new glasses. She had not dreamed that poor Norah enjoyed poetry. As if

God's singing birds were not made to delight everybody!

And now it was Martina's turn. A well-aimed dip toward a good-sized bundle she had been shrewd enough to notice before her eyes were bandaged, made her the happy possessor of Mr. Yeaton's slippers. "Just what I am glad to get!" exclaimed the thrifty Swede. "When I buy shoe-leather I must get the stoutest, but these warm, wool-worked slippers will be just the thing to trot around in indoors."

The well-satisfied girls now retired to the kitchen with their trophies, and then Joy was blinded.

It was suggested that the bag be well shaken up before every trial, as all were tolerably familiar with the size and location of each parcel. But if Joy had taken deliberate aim she could not have been better pleased than when she found she had touched the paper containing Tom's big jack-knife. "Ah, I know you'll like that!" said the laughing boy. "Such a girl for whittling and borrowing her brother's knife, there never was."

Tom's venture was declared a killing of "two birds with one stone," for he touched simultaneously the soft little bundles which held the gay ties selected as suitable gifts for Norah and Martina. But Tom declared that they were his heart's desire for decorating a new kite.

And now came pretty Bella, who touched the Concordance.

"What in the world can you do with that, my dear butterfly?" exclaimed her father."

"How can you ask me?" retorted Bella, "when you know I have such a time getting my Sunday-school lesson. Only last Sunday I asked mamma where I could find a reference about 'thirty basins of gold.' She said, 'Ask your father.' Your reply was, 'Ask your mother.' And there I was batted like a shuttlecock from one to another, till poor mother, in despair, said, 'Search Leviticus.' I searched, and did not find it, and now, in this beloved Concordance, I see that the 'thirty basins of gold' are in Ezra."

Mrs. Yeaton looked at the substantial volume in the arms of her lively daughter, and sighed regretfully. "That was intended for you, Mr. Titus."

Mrs. Yeaton had the greatest respect for her son-in-law, and would never presume to address him as "George."

"To be frank," exclaimed that reverend gentleman, "I have a Concordance, mother, and my old one is so used to me that it almost opens of itself where I want it. This elegant volume would look well in my library, but, really, I think sister Belle needs it."

"Let your wife take her turn now," interposed Joy.

Mrs. Titus was a delicate, sweet little woman, who never asserted herself, but timidly walked in the path of duty. She was an ideal minister's wife, of the passive form. She advanced gracefully toward the

bag, and with natural intuition, it would seem, her finger softly touched the smallest remaining bundle. It was a tiny box, not two inches long. As the cover was opened, revealing a pair of exquisite opal earrings, everybody was astonished to see the swift delight that tinted the cheeks of the meek, little minister's wife.

"Jewelry!" she exclaimed. "Am I really to have some jewelry at last. I am overjoyed!"

"Why, Eliza!" chorused the family, "you should have had oceans of it long ago if we'd ever supposed you would wear such a thing."

Bella hurriedly suspended the dainty jewels from her sister's ears, exclaiming, "who would believe this was 'Mrs. Reverend Titus?' as some of her parishioners call her! But don't blush so, my dear! They're no more wicked than dew-drops on a rose. *Do* you think they are wicked, brother George?" Mr. Titus expressed his approval decidedly, and then kindly diverted attention from his wife by protesting he had waited too long for his turn.

His present proved to be the pound of caramels, and this seemed to amuse his wife more than anything that had yet been taken. "The presents are bewitched!" she declared. "I would like to know who ever found out that caramels are George's pet weakness, and to have a pound of them at once,—all his own! If you want to behold perfect happiness,

just look at him!" The good man looked indeed as blissful as a schoolboy with a whole sheet of gingerbread.

Good mother Yeaton, quite distressed at this singular award of a Christmas present to the minister, now took her turn, and the family again were surprised at the acceptableness of the unintended gift. It was the novel of Mrs. Whitney. "At last, girls," said she, "I have a novel of my own. I never have a chance to read your books from the public library before it is time to return them, but this I can enjoy at my leisure."

"How curious!" interrupted Joy. "The new glasses have tumbled out of their wrapper, after so much stirring up, and are hanging from the book. Keep them, mother dear, you will need to use them together."

"And now," said Mr. Yeaton, "I may take, I suppose, what is left without waiting to be blinded?" And he relieved the bag of its last package, which contained the little well-stuffed purse originally intended for Joy. "To be left till called for, my dear." And he tucked it carefully into the little girl's pocket.

Thus ended the experiment of a Christmas grab-bag; and the Yeatons have always declared that never were Christmas gifts more welcome than those most unexpected ones bestowed by Joy's novel plan.

SKIPPER SAM AND HIS NEPHEWS.



RAY as a Quaker!" cried Lot, as one bound from the bed and one clutch at the bit of curtain revealed a promising sky for fishermen. It was four o'clock of an August morning. All night the ceaseless brush of the waves had smoothed and curled the gray sands, and then decked them with a border of white pebbles. It was a most lovely beach on the picturesque coast of Maine. Right by the shore was the cottage of Skipper Sam. "Sam" everybody called him, though his orphan nephews, whom he was educating at Phillips Academy, were often addressed as *Master* Lot, Frank, Philip and Guy. They were among the brightest scholars in their classes; but the best thing about them was that they were never ashamed of their poor, old uncle. Well enough they knew that they owed all their superior advantages to him. He had saved the life of a rich man who was upset in his yacht off Boon Island, and when the grateful hand forced a large sum of money in return.

upon honest Sam, he placed it in the bank, consecrating it to the education of the four boys, children of his dead brothers, who made his house their home, and whose training at Exeter had been prefaced by loving care from Skipper Sam and his good wife Judy.

This summer a large party of Phillips' boys camped out on the beach. Rather young and rather foolish they were, and showed their ill-breeding by ridiculing the home and best friends of these four Morrill boys. Although most of them had never been at the beach before, and all knew precious little of the management of a boat, they scorned any advice. They had especially snubbed Skipper Sam, and declared among themselves that if he were their uncle they would shut him up in a clam-shell. They had overheard the Morrills planning for an early fishing-trip, and thought it would be a bright idea to get ahead of them. Skipper Luce, an experienced boatman, offered to accompany the young sailors; but they wanted his boat, not him. The man, having satisfied himself that there were rich fathers behind these confident fellows, gave up his "Sparkle," though not without a sigh, lest he might never see her again.

Little Pete Munson, the youngest of the party, decided, at the last moment, that "discretion was the better part of valor," and jumped out of the boat, less afraid of the taunts of the boys than he was of the



cold water which looked anything but inviting to the sleepy and shivering youngster.

He was glad to see the boat gradually receding, as Skipper Luce pushed it over the complaining pebbles toward the slippery waves.

"And now, fellows," said the Skipper, "keep your weather-eye out. Don't ye go to crowdin' on sail unless ye want it for a windin'-sheet. An' if a fog comes up, or shets down, don't be sech fools as to go bummin' round nobody knows where."

The boys paid about as much heed to his suggestions as they did to the gurgl' of the little waves at the bows, and rounding the point of gray rocks, were soon out of sight.

Half an hour later, old Sam and his boys were on their way. Like a horse that knows his rider, the tidy boat dashed over the sea, now faintly tinged, like the sky, with the pink and purple colors of early morning.

They did not know the intentions of the Phillips' boys; but if they had, Skipper Sam would not have feared losing his share of mackerel. At any rate, they had the fishing-ground to themselves. There was not a boat in sight. The eager beauties came crowding round the boat, as if asking to be caught.

Skipper Sam never lost his relish for the sea. Like the mercies of God, it was to him "new every morning, and fresh every evening." He had all the

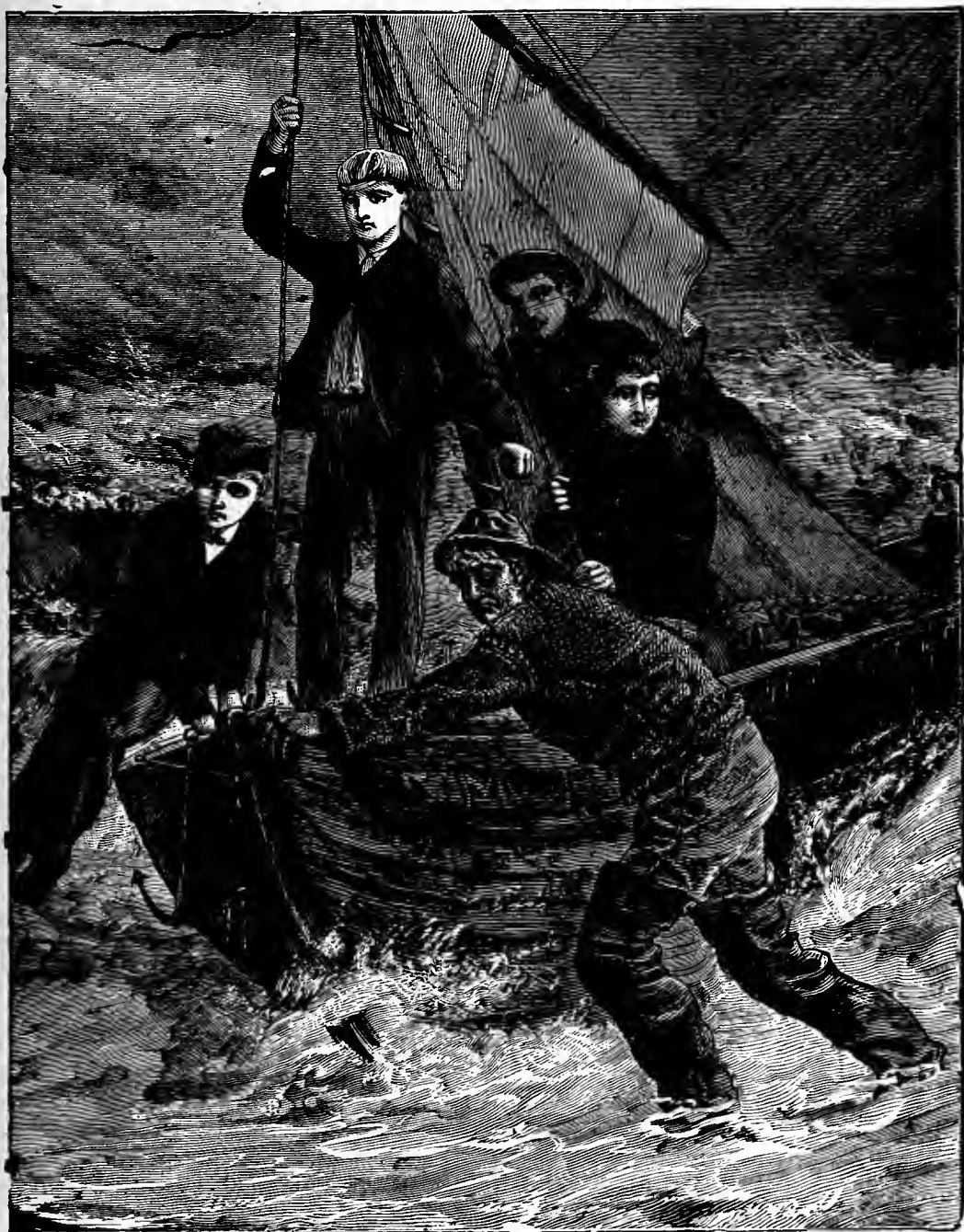


enthusiasm of a boy. He declared of this trip, as he had of all he had taken with his nephews, that he "was havin' a surprisin' good time. Never was such a pooty sky. Fish bit like black flies in Aroostook. Air was upliftin'."

At last, there was a unanimous vote to return. Aunt Judy's fried perch, Johnny-cake, and coffee were becoming more attractive than fishing. Homeward-bound, they heard faint cries. At first, these seemed to be the various whistles of steamers outward bound, but the shrill and piercing sounds articulated at last, unmistakably, the piteous word—H-e-l-p! H-e-l-p!

Skipper Sam's boat, the "Handy Andy," was none too soon. The foolhardy Phillips' boys had crowded on sail, unmindful of the sound advice they had at the start, and the result was an upset and a lost boat. And if the once-despised Skipper Sam had not come to the rescue there would have been not only a lost boat, but a lost crew. The Morrill boys were good in an emergency, and aided their uncle in saving one dripping aristocrat after another from the briny deep.

Uncle Sam and his nephews brought their unexpected passengers safely to land, where kind Aunt Judy saw that they were properly provided with dry clothes and a good dinner. But Uncle Sam declared that "humble-pie had taken away their appetite, poor fellows."



A BEAR IN COURT.

Skipper Luce demanded a round sum for his lost "Sparkle," which no more would dance on the water.

Little Pete wisely forbore to crow over his discomfited comrades. They had learned a good lesson from their first deep-sea fishing. Hereafter they behaved rather more as American boys should, and remembered occasionally that "honor and shame from no condition rise."

A BEAR IN COURT.

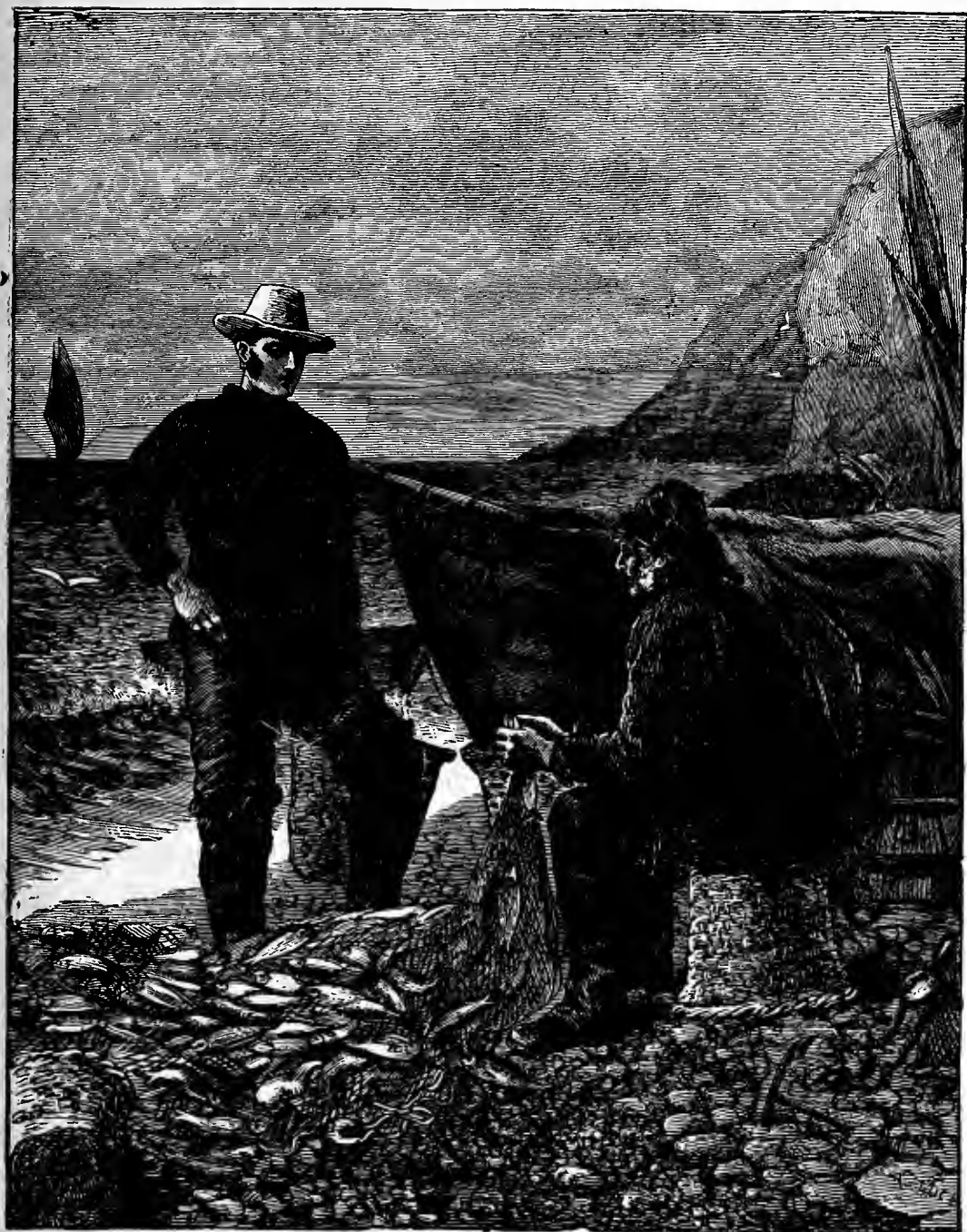


NEVER since the days of Elisha, and, doubtless, before that time, children have been specially afraid of bears.

Naughty nurses never say "a big *leopard* will catch you; there's a great, black *hyena* down cellar; but —"

Oh, well! we know what they say.

Never fear, though, my dear little ones. The worst of all bears—the polar bears—are away off, fast asleep, too, bedded deeply under snow and ice, awaiting the return of the sun. And when their short summer tempts them forth, never think they can get to you. They are all barred in by a line called



the Arctic Circle, and though it is an imaginary line, they can't possibly step over it.

Then, as to the black and brown and grizzly, and all the rest of the bears, if you ever do see one, it will be caged, or under a keeper's care.

Brown bears are sometimes taken when quite young, and taught to stand on their hind legs, and dance in rude and awkward measure to tunes either sung or played on an instrument.

A few years ago, one of these gay and innocent little bears had been spending a few days at a watering-place not far from the city of Portsmouth, N. H. He had delighted the hearts of the babies and boys, and drawn tears of mingled admiration and fear from the girls, and, in fact, for a *bear*, he had been quite "a lion." So, with his foolish head turned by all the attention he had received, he left the little beach to return to Portsmouth.

In the summer-time, of course, all the roads leading out of that quaint old city are dusty with travel, and the very daisies by the roadside look quite cityfied and jaded, they see so much of fashion.

Peacefully toward Portsmouth, with his master, trotted young Bruin. He was innocent, and he knew it. Had he been just a St. Bernard, and not a bear, he could not have been more guileless. In fact, he was generally so considered. Horses and dogs and children even did not give him a distrustful look. But,



at last, there came along a fine, spirited nag, which had a penetrating mind. That you could see in a moment by the suddenly pointed and agitated ears,—a horse's first sign of alarm.

The next instant there was an unmanageable runaway, a ruined carriage, a horse dead with fright.

Whatever he had heard the children's nursery-girl say, I don't know; but it was certain that the horse knew that a bear was to be feared.

The owner of the horse prosecuted the owner of the bear. Judge, jury, and lawyers solemnly considered the case. And though poor Bruin had done nothing whatever that was criminal, he was found guilty of being a bear, and his owner had heavy damages to pay.

If any of you *should* be in a country where there are bears at large, it may be useful to remember that while one is gazing into the eyes of a bear the bear will make no attack, but remain motionless.

Many years ago, far back in the thinly settled part of Maine, there was a boy about thirteen years old, whose name was John.

One morning, early in autumn, as John was passing through the woods, eating some raspberries, he saw, about three rods ahead of him, the startling appearance of a bear, crouched down in the bushes, a few feet outside of the road, just ready to spring upon him when he should come near enough.

John had heard that there was some mysterious influence in the human eye which would cause a bear to quail. So John, having assured himself that it was a real, live bear which he had discovered, looked steadily into the ugly, snapping eyes, and kept walking backwards till he was at a safe distance, and then he turned about and soon reached Farmer Smith's house, a quarter of a mile away.

Farmer Smith heard John's eager story rather coolly; guessed they would not need a gun; admitted that two bears had been seen thereabouts last week eating raspberries like schoolboys. Finally, the good man went with John to the woods where bears and raspberries grew.

"There he is!" said John, in a low voice.

Mr. Smith said, "We will go a little nearer."

After walking about a rod further, the illusion vanished. The bear had turned into a stump, which had been dug up, taken out of the road, and had been blackened by fire. Where John had stood it was not difficult, with the aid of a little imagination, to see the head, ears, eyes, mouth, and teeth of a bear.

So you see, boys, that John escaped; and if any of you should see, or should think you see a bear, by looking him right in the eye, as John did, I think you also will escape.

DULCE'S PARTY.



DULCE did not know what to do with herself. Indoors was dull. Outdoors was lively enough, right by the doorstep, where Will and Wont, the stormy pets of the house, were having their usual quarrel. But when they had subsided, Dulce languished for something interesting to happen, and, at last, bethought her to play party.

Accordingly, little sister Ida was summoned; also, the next-door neighbors Fanny and Kitty Hicks, together with the fifteen dolls,—counting the wax, china, plaster, and paper children of these little mothers.

Then the table was set,—in a very sandy place, to tell the truth; but what of that, as long as the currant-bushes hung their chains of rubies over it.

Dulce's new green china-set was neatly arranged upon the snowdrop square of linen that covered the table, and this, I must confess, was the principal part of the supper, for Mrs. Kemble and Mrs. Hicks were



DULCE'S PARTY.

away, and so was Mrs. Hicks's Bridget. As for the Kembles' Maggie, she was always cross on ironing-days, and when the little girls asked for something for their party she just threw them a handful of crackers, and pointed grimly to the pump, as if that was all they might expect from her.

But the good, little fairy,—Imagination,—whose special work it is to help children play, changed the crackers into dainty slices of chicken and tiny, frosted loaves of wedding-cake and crimson-hearted tarts. And as for the water that the eight little arms pumped with so much trouble, when it was poured into the china pitcher it thickened into cream, of course; and the moment it filled the delicate little tea-pot, it bubbled and sung like young hyson.

"All ready, but seats," said Dulce. So she ran across the street to the Hicks's, and then rushed into her mother's sitting-room, and finally appeared in the garden-walk dragging four reluctant little rocking-chairs, which hooked one another and poor Dulce in a most uncomfortable way.

"Stand up the children, now," said the little hostess, "and pin the paper ones to the bushes before they blow away."

"Now, this is the big parlor at country-side," she continued, treading the ground into a three-ply carpet.

"And we are the mothers come to visit grandmother with our children."

"And I'm the grandmother," said Fanny, promptly.

"I think the youngest ought to be the grandmother," pouted little Kitty, shaking her red curls.

"And I think the oldest ought to be the grandmother," argued Dulce. "My sister Ida is most nine."

Ida, the meek little girl, would not have presumed to be a grandmother under any circumstances. Little Kitty always yielded at last to her elder sister.

Dulce said, very sweetly, but with malice flashing eyes, "Do be the grandmother, Fanny; but pin Mrs. Tom Thumb up again first. See! she's flying into the cabbages."

Artful little Dulce! As soon as Fanny was in pursuit of Mrs. Thumb, she drank every bit of the "tea"! But she put the tea-pot innocently in its place again, and looked as demure as a cat when Fanny got back.

Fanny seated herself with great satisfaction at the head of the table, looked at her descendants and the pretty tea-equipage proudly, and in the joy of her heart said, "Oh, I'm the grandmother! Daughter Dulce, will you have some tea?"

Dulce's gray eyes dared not look up for the mischief that was in them, but the demure little lips answered, "If you please."

Then with great dignity did the old lady place in the saucers the tiny cups, and incline over their gilded rims the fragrant tea-pot.

What was the matter?

Grandmother raised the cover, and then — over went the table, and daughter Dulce's head was beaten like a tenor-drum.

Not that Fanny's dimpled fists were so very hard, but Dulce's gold locks were not a helmet, and fierce is the wrath of an angry grandmother!

"Ah, I know it was you," she cried. "You have spoiled all our good time, and Kitty and I will go right home, and never play with you again."

"I wish *you* would go," laughed the naughty Dulce; "but I want Kitty. And, oh, Kitty!" she whispered among the red curls, "you stay, and we'll do something tremendous."

Fanny flew off in a pet. Kitty walked toward the house with Dulce to do something "tremendous," while the grave little Ida picked up the scattered toys.

Dulce's father was sitting on the piazza; and when the little girls walked up the steps, they heard him talking with a temperance lecturer.

"How fascinating wine is!" said the stranger. "Why, I don't dare taste a drop, though I have been a reformed man these seventeen years."

Dulce whispered, almost frightened at her own wickedness, "If I had some, I'd drink it all up. Did you ever taste any, Kitty?"

"Oh, lots of times. We always have it at dinner when we have company."

DULCE'S PARTY.

"Does it taste 'fascinating'?"

"Dear me, yes! Just like medicine."

"I should like to try some," mused Dulce.

"I'll tell you how you can, then," said the innocent, little tempter. "Just bring some tight bottles and spoons out to the currant-bushes, and we'll make some."

Ida had cleared away the dishes, released the paper dolls from their torture, and carried the army of grandchildren into the house. Now she was sitting on the back doorsteps reading her Sabbath-school book, never dreaming of what was going on in the garden.

"This tastes too good," said Dulce, as she dipped daintily into the currant-juice with fingers as crimson.

"Wait till it sours and sizzles," suggested Kitty, with the wisdom of an old importer.

"It must 'bite like a serpent,'" continued Dulce, "so I mean to put some vinegar in."

"And some yeast, to make it foamy," added Kitty.

Maggie had finished her ironing, and had become so good-natured, listening to Ida's reading, that she gave "that quare child," Dulce, the "'east," and "vindegar," asking no questions.

The mixture was at last duly stirred, bottled tightly, and hidden under the cabbage-leaves, "lest," as Dulce said, "the temperance-man should drink it all up."

DULCE'S PARTY.

The children kept their secret till the next afternoon, when they agreed to test their wine in the summer-house.

Kitty was going to take tea at her aunt's, but she remembered her promise, and came over to the parsonage first, looking as sweet as a jessamine in her pale, buff cambric.

"Dear me!" said Dulce, admiringly, "I wish I was dressed up. Ida! may I take your blue parasol outdoors?"

"Yes, indeed," answered the pleasant voice up-stairs.

"I begin to feel dreadful wicked," said Kitty, penitently, as they walked down the shady garden-path; "and, besides, I dread to taste that wine."

"So do I," said Dulce. "I wish it was a little wicked to drink water. Don't you suppose it would taste a little nicer if it was?"

Kitty did not answer. She was too busy among the cabbage-leaves. Oh, the wicked delight of seeing the impatient wine rage inside the bottles!

"Take this nail! pry out the stopples!" cried Dulce, in great excitement.

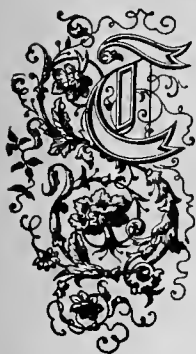
Then, in a changed voice, she exclaimed, "Oh, Kitty Hicks, see what that wine has done!"

For, the moment the cork was lifted out, it gushed like a mad little fountain, leaving its wrath in white spots over Kitty's delicate buff dress, and ruining the beautiful blue parasol.

THAT DREADFUL DONKEY.

You would not care to hear about the distress that followed. Dulce thought her father meant her, when he happened to read from Proverbs that evening, at prayers, "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath redness of eyes?" The next evening there was a Sabbath-school concert. The temperance lecturer was there, and offered a pledge for the scholars to sign. The very first names written there were Dulce Kemble and Kitty Hicks.

THAT DREADFUL DONKEY.



HERE is a lovely little cluster of homes not far from Boston. The name of the place is not Beulah, on the map, but the people that live there often call it so. Such a restful little nook as it is!

Once, a carriage full of ladies were driving through the village, when their horse stumbled and fell, and in all Beulah there could not be found a man to come to the rescue. The heads of the families, you understand, go to Boston every morning. Perhaps, and perhaps not, that is why the place is called Beulah.

THAT DREADFUL DONKEY.

Yet, there was sometimes a stir, and all because of the Landrigans' donkey. This animal had been provided by Mr. Landrigan for the convenience of his family and the neighbors; for, in those days — fifteen or twenty years ago — Beulah was far from the market, and, if unexpected company arrived, what so useful as a donkey and a boy to go to West Galileo, the nearest market town?

So the donkey soon found out that he was an important citizen, and took on airs.

At first, he simply made himself unpleasant by choosing his own route when he was sent of errands. Next, he discovered that he had a high tenor voice, and he would give *solos* to the little children on their way to the primary school, scaring their A, B, C's quite out of them.

At last, becoming very conceited, he tried to break down the Orthodox Church in Beulah. I don't mean that he rushed at the church building, like a battering-ram, but that he was so impudent as to interrupt the good preacher, set the boys and girls to giggling, and sometimes succeeded in driving all seriousness out of the worship.

The donkey was complained of again and again, until the owner promised that he should be muzzled, or driven to a distant pasture during church service.

But Brignoli, as the donkey was called, had his revenge.



THAT DREADFUL DONKEY.

It was in war-times, and most of our young men wore blue coats with brass buttons, and looked the heroes that they were.

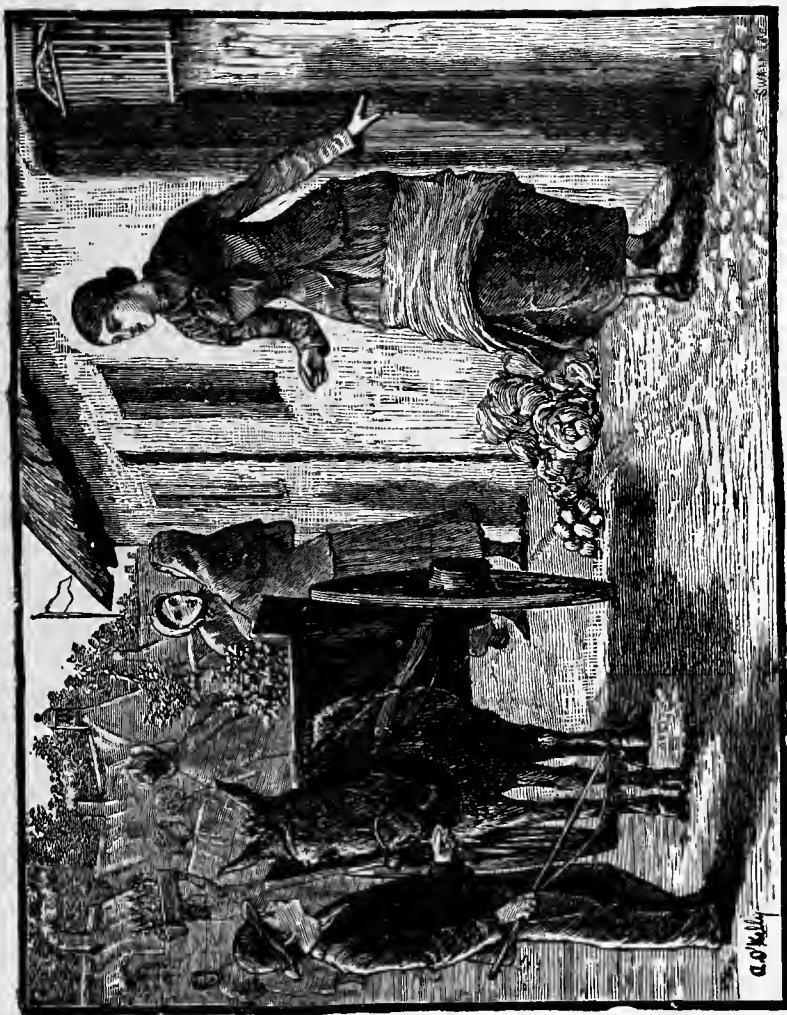
Once in a while—a very great while—a coward heart beat feebly under the brave uniform.

Sergeant Pilsbury was a splendid-looking officer. “Born to command,” you might think, at first sight. Such a tall, big man, with black eyes and fierce moustache. He had, however, a soft, little voice, and his comrades-in-arms declared that he had been known to jump and turn pale at the popping of corn by the camp-fire. In fact, they did not believe in Sergeant Pilsbury.

It was Friday evening. Most of the good people had been to the prayer-meeting, and, in consequence, Brignoli had been driven to the distant pasture, there to perform his *solos* without interfering with *Ortonville*. At last, the bell rang for nine. The people walked quietly home. The sexton turned down the kerosene, and locked the pretty church in darkness.

The Landrigan boys, with a lantern, had walked home with Brignoli, and left him to himself in the meadow-lot next to the church.

He felt sulky and vicious. Well he knew that he had trotted to West Galileo for the minister’s steak that day, and had climbed the sandy hills to Butler’s greenhouse, two miles another way; in fact, had been at the beck and call of all Beulah.



And then, just as it had become cool and delightful, and the pleasant light shone through the tinted windows of the church, as if asking him to join the service, was it not too hard to be driven away?

But he would be revenged some way, — somehow. As a plan came into his head, his long ears heard steps along the gravel walk that ran just outside the stone wall. It was dark, — so dark that night. Up in the sky not a moon — not even a half nor a quarter of one; not a star either.

In the village, hardly a gleam of light, only from the windows of the little railroad-station. Occasionally, through the darkness, a passenger-train shot like a meteor, or a freight-train writhed like a fiery serpent.

Nearer came the steps.

Now, Brignoli, as I have hinted, was an uncommonly wise donkey. He had, it is true, a very bad temper; but he was keen, and he had found out somehow that Sergeant Pilsbury, for all his brass buttons, was a very small man. Brignoli also knew as well as anybody that Miss Ruth Morse was deserving of a better husband. And Brignoli knew that these two people were now walking quietly near him.

He made up his vicious mind that he would scare the sergeant out of his boots.

So when they were just opposite him, he stretched his long neck, — and, such a sound! The screech of



THAT DREADFUL DONKEY.

a steam-whistle was a nightingale compared to it. It was so sudden, so shocking, so near.

Sergeant Pilsbury ran for his life, forgetful of Ruth and of everything but his precious self, till he was safe in his uncle's parlor, and could collect his few wits.

People generally never knew how it came about that Ruth Morse's engagement was broken, but when some months later it was known he had deserted the army, and when other things not to his credit came out, Ruth was not sorry that she had changed her plans.

And Brignoli knew when it was that she made up her mind to change them.

She rewarded the donkey by marked kindness, and he so far reformed that at last he could be trusted to stand right by the church windows, and not once yield to the temptation to take part in the service.



HANDYNE AND HANDOUTE.



HIS lively picture of young English cricketers may look still more interesting if you should know that there is an American boy among them.

There he is, Bert Allan, the young fellow well satisfied to be borne away by admiring boys, while hearty cheers tell of a well-earned victory.

But why isn't Bert at his own beloved school in the state of Maine, instead of leading the Eleven in the English national game?

A year ago Bert was the most popular boy in school, at Kent's Hill, and had no more idea of leaving his native land than he had of studying for the ministry. In fact, studying for anything had not very clearly been thought of by Bert as yet.

He was the only son of a sea-captain. His mother had died of consumption, and the one great dread of Captain Allan was that his bright, pleasant boy might inherit his mother's disease. Bert had, therefore, been

brought up with the notion that "a little learning is a dangerous thing." His great fondness for manly sports tallied well with his idea that study was unhealthy, and students might become consumptives. Everybody liked Bert, and everybody could see that he had brain as well as muscle; but he had never put his mind on his books, and Professor Wiseman, his teacher, could do little to persuade him to study, when his father and other relatives were sending warning letters, begging that Bert might be urged to take outdoor exercise, and not become a book-worm.

One May Saturday, in a game of base-ball, he over-exerted himself, and was attacked with bleeding at the lungs. The Allans' family-doctor said that Bert must leave school, and take a trip to Liverpool on his father's vessel, and if he was then able to go to school anywhere, it would be well to leave him in England to fit for college.

Bert's boyish heart was never so full of grief as when he left Kent's Hill. He told the fellows "that he should run away from that old English school,—they would see him back. He couldn't stand being fitted in England,—too much Yankee Doodle about him."

But he thought better of his threats when fairly acquainted with our English cousins, and soon took his place as much a favorite on the cricket-ground at Rugby as he had been at base-ball in Maine.



Cricket, as you well know, is the English national game. There is hardly a town, village, or school there without its cricket-ground. For centuries, John Bull and his grandfathers have, in their turn, gone wild over the balls and wickets. English poetry as far back as 1680 describes the game, and prose writers in the fourteenth century speak of it under the quaint name of "*Handyne and Handoute*." How it came to be called "cricket," nobody knows, though there has been much learned guessing about it. It is my opinion that the phrase, "lively as a cricket," does not mean "the cricket on the hearth," but the active English cricketer, all equipped with his spiked shoes, his arm and leg guards, to conquer, or — something else.

Bert's letters were full of the base-ball he had left, and the cricket he had come to; and when he wrote about a proposed game between his own club, "The Merlin Guards," and "The Lively Jumpers," it is a wonder the Kent's Hill boys did not ship for England, so great was their anxiety for Bert's club to beat.

Even Professor Wiseman, who was no friend to base-ball and cricket, shared the excitement of the boys. Bert promised to cable the result of the cricket-game, and Professor Wiseman consented to read the despatch to the school on its arrival, even if it should come in study-hour.

It was just in the midst of the Virgil-recitation that the despatch came. The whole school was summoned,

and amid a really dreadful stillness, the Professor opened and read the following cablegram :—

“RUGBY, WARWICK, June 4th.

“*To all hands at Kent's Hill :*

“Licked 'em!

“BERT.”

The Professor cheered as long and loud as any boy there. But none of them could have guessed the hero that Bert was on the English turf that day.

The Captain of the Lively Jumpers—Bert's opponents—was one Bradley Heald, a fellow bound to win anyhow, by fair means or foul. He had noted with a good deal of alarm that the Merlin Guards were better manned, better practised, and every way better fellows than his own club. He could think of no way to escape the contest set for the 4th of June, and he felt that he was likely to be beaten.

The night before the game was to come off he lay in wait behind a hedge as Bert was passing, and with a skill worthy a highwayman he tripped up Bert, and wrenched his left wrist in just the place and way he had planned to do. It was a painful hurt, and, in the bewilderment and suffering it caused, he escaped before Bert could grapple him. Rascals, however, never need flatter themselves that they have covered their tracks. Ten to one, some unthought-of trifle will betray them.

A group of students soon came along, set Bert on his feet, and while watching the discolored and swollen wrist of their leader, began, of course, to wonder who his assailant was.

"Just like Brad Heald to do it," was the verdict; but how to prove that it was he?

Bert dropped his arm, and from out his sleeve rolled a glittering little witness, — a sleeve-button, with the monogram B. H. cut in the stone. All the fellows knew it well, and remembered how Bradley had sported the new buttons just after the Christmas holidays.

"Boys," said Bert, with his lip in a pitiful tremble made up of scorn and pain, and above all of bitter disappointment, "you'll have to choose another leader."

"That we won't," cried the young Britons. "You go to the field, if we have to carry you, and if we fail, this little story of the sleeve-button shall be told."

Bert was not carried to the field, but worked there like a wounded hero, the excitement tiding him along in spite of the sharp pain in his disabled wrist.

It was a hard day for the Lively Jumpers, and hardest of all for their captain.

When the story of the sleeve-button was told, as told it was by the umpires right on the ground, Brad was fairly hissed off the field by his own club. "*Handyne and Handoute*" was the final yell that greeted him.



LITTLE MAY'S CHRISTMAS MORNING.



REAKFAST was late, to be sure, but the children did not want *any*; it was enough to feast their eyes upon what came out of their Christmas stockings.

On the floor sat little May and Paul, still in their night-dresses, just perfectly happy with their hearts' desires, — a doll and a go-cart.

But this was the third time their mother had said, "Now, let me dress you, my dears, and you shall have your toys beside you at the breakfast-table."

Little May jumped up briskly, and was soon ready. Paul followed suit, though it was trying to have him cling so to that horse and cart, as if they could follow him through his sleeves.

"Well, I'm thankful," said the weary mother, "that you are dressed at last. What, if children had as many arms or legs as caterpillars?"

It was a happy sight, as we all know, — bright little faces at the Christmas breakfast-table!



What if dolls and carts may get broken the next day, the children's delight is so gay while it does last?

This morning, May's mother wanted to teach her another kind of happiness,—that of making other people happy. So she asked her how she would like to put aside her doll for a little while, and take a mince-pie to Mrs. Fowler, a poor old lady who lived quite alone in a little, brown house at the end of the long village street.

There was just half a sigh at first, but somehow the real Christmas feeling filled the little girl's heart, and made her want to make somebody else as happy as she herself was.

In a minute, she raced out of the room, and then came back to be wrapped like a little Red Ridinghood in her winter scarlet.

When she was fairly out doors, she stood breathless a moment at the beauty of everything, for last night the first real snow-storm had come, covering with its soft white all the unlovely frozen ground, draping the skeleton trees with down and diamonds, and, best of all, making first-rate sleighing.

As the child printed her new rubber-boots daintily upon the untrodden snow by the roadside, she thought how very nice it would be to ride instead; and, suddenly, as if a fairy had flown from the snow-crystals and granted her wish, up the hill dashed a horse and sleigh. Not alone, however. The pretty young lady

LITTLE MAY'S CHRISTMAS MORNING.

in the sleigh was Squire Denny's daughter, Jennie, and the driver was Jennie's brother, Ralph, just returned from California.

Little May's eyes were not for them so much as for the great prancing gray horse, and the gay sleigh, just a dazzle of gilt and red, and jingling bells.

Miss Denny had to speak twice before May fairly understood.

"Would you like to ride with us, dear? We are going the rounds to collect goodies for poor Mrs. Fowler. Won't you come, too? And do you think your mother would like to send anything?"

May, for answer, showed them her mince-pie; then Mr. Ralph lifted the little girl into the sleigh, turned a charmingly short corner, then dashed off towards Mrs. Fowler's little cottage.

At last, the gray horse stood still, and Miss Jennie, little May, and the rest of the "goodies," were unloaded at Mrs. Fowler's door.

The first creak of the hinges roused a cackling, crowing, and fluttering, and they found themselves with a dusty crowd of hens. In the midst of all was a little chirruping old woman, much like a motherly hen herself, as she cried, "Cut, cut, cut! There, there! Go to your roost again, and show your manners. Let the good people in, will you?"

"Ralph, I declare for't! You didn't lose the crinkles out of your pooty hair while you was abroad.

What! Something for my Christmas! Nice turkey, all roasted, too. Well, I'm obleeged to you, I'm sure.

"Marthy-Jane,—I won't '*Fennie*' you! No, no! That's a name for a bar-maid,—tell your 'ma I'm obleeged to her for her victuals, and to you for bringing them. And little May, too! Your 'ma is another good one. Present my duty to all the good neighbors that remembered the lone, old woman. Not so lonesome, either, as I might be. My hens are my children,—roost on my foot-board, wake up before you want 'em to, just like children; want their breakfast, too, before it's ready for them, and never appear their best before strangers,—like children again. But, there, chickens will be children! My black Polly there, I might say, is my favorite child,—can't help it."

"Haven't you some curiosities to show us, auntie?" said Miss Jennie.

"Not as I know of," replied the old lady, rather crossly. "There's the same old things you've seen,—the petrified toad, the skin of the sea-serpent, the bottle of holy water" ("I saw her myself when she filled that bottle from the Kennebec," whispered Miss Jennie, impolitely); "then," continued Mrs. Fowler, "there's a piece of the boat Arnold, the traitor, sailed to Canada in. You know it got aground down by my *shoemack* bush, and slivered off a piece." And

the old lady looked up with innocent eyes as she gave this bit of history.

"She has told that story so many times," thought Ralph, "that she believes it herself."

"But what's under here, auntie?" said Miss Jennie, gently touching the curiously-covered table.

"Shu! shu! child! That's a show! Admission ten cents; children half price."

Tickets, with reserved seats, were secured at once.

"Well, then," said the old lady, taking off the cover, "if you must know, it is American History to instruct the villagers — (drive that little bantam away, will you, Marthy-Jane)? — there, then. This is George Washington holding up —"

"Not a hatchet, I hope," interrupted Ralph.

"It is to be presumed he kept it even when he was a president; and, at any rate," continued the old lady, who disliked interruption, "it gives me a chance to teach little boys to let cherry-trees alone.

"Most of the characters are in pasteboard, but the prominent ones I make out of dough.

"The military men are my favorites, for they look well on a horse; but there's no rhyme nor reason in mounting a lawyer, or a tailor, or any such character. General Scott, now! What a fine appearance he makes. I wish I could give these great men a voice; but the most I can do is to make them move." And, then,

in some mysterious way, she caused the General's horse to cross the parade-ground.

"This is the best of all," said the old lady, as she started up another dough-puppet, who bore a small hat, which he jerked back and forth among historical Americans; and then, coming to the verge of the stage, held it appealingly to Mr. Ralph and Miss Jennie. They took it, and filled it with silver coin.

"Oh, you did not notice Benjamin Franklin, with his kite. Where *is* Franklin? O! that sly Polly! She has eaten him 'most up!" It was too true. The great philosopher had come to an untimely end.

The visitors hastened to leave, knowing that the old lady's temper could not bear much.

Charming to be out again in the snow and sunshine, with the dancing bells.

Not till little May stood by her own door did she think of her Christmas-doll. But it was all the more precious, because she had forgotten it for a little while in striving to make some one else happy.

VERY LITTLE ABOUT WHALES.



NOW, boys, if you want to see a whale skinned, here is your chance! I would rather be excused, if you please. But I can tell you all about it, if you want to know. I have not been there, I am happy to say, but I've read about it, which is good, or as bad, as standing on the deck of that ship.

If you intend to ship on a whaler, you would do well to search the cyclopædias; or, better still, hear a New Bedford captain talk. Then you will find how necessary it is to go through with the operation which this picture shows, and a good deal more besides. First, the floating monster is secured by chains to the vessel's side, and a large piece of his skin is taken off. This is called the "blanket." The remaining coverlid is then taken off, as they roll him over in his "cradle of the deep." But this is not all, nor half. The next thing is to lower two or three sailors down his mouth, that they may secure the "baleen," or whalebone, which, in animals of average size, weighs nearly a ton.

VERY LITTLE ABOUT WHALES.

I don't know what you may think about such excursions, boys, but *I* would rather go down cellar after apples.

In the case of a sperm-whale, a larger party goes down into the treasure-house, and there they have to stand, eight or ten sailors of them holding buckets for the gushing oil.

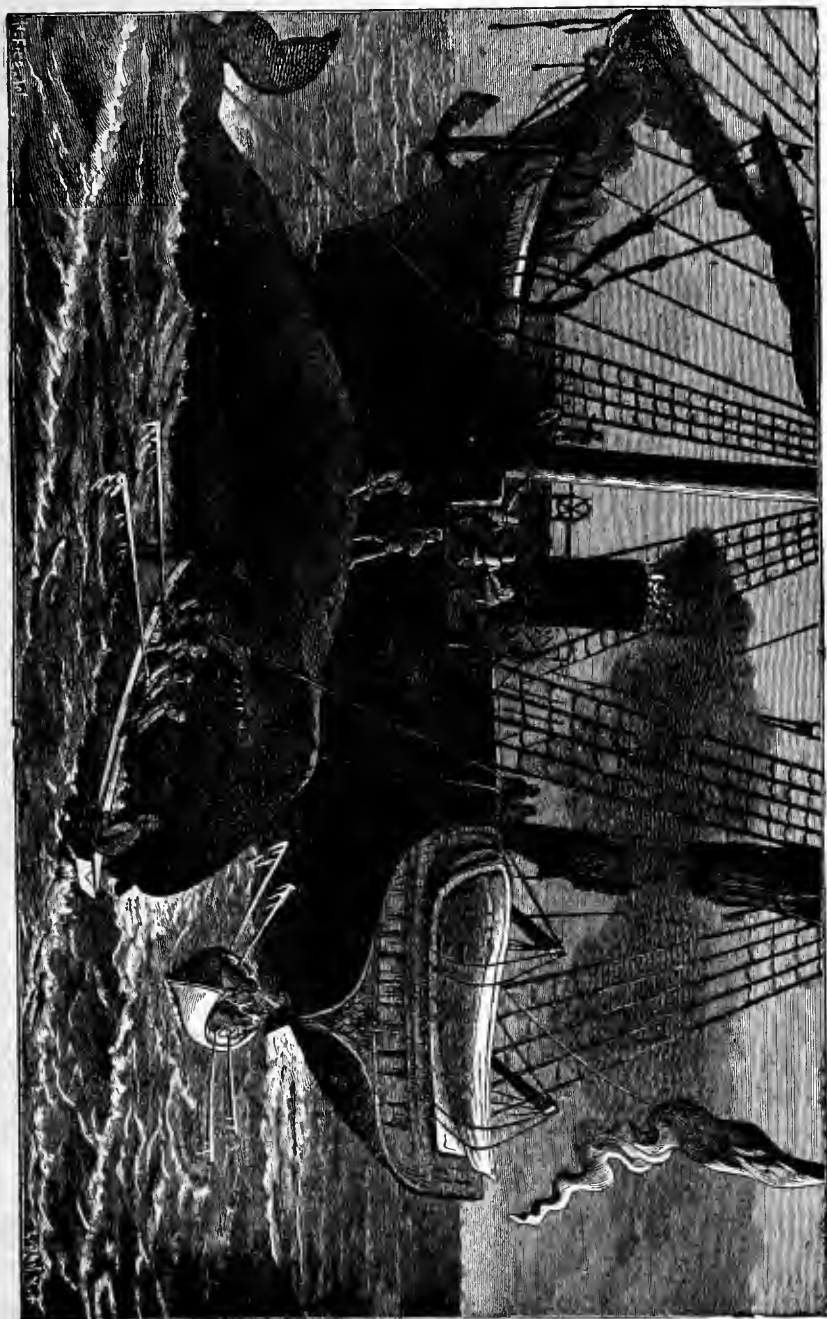
But this will do for "valuable information" about the whale.

Let us pass to presidents, by way of changing the subject.

Four years ago, nearly, the little railroad-station in the town of Franklin was gay. Everybody of note, and the rest of the villagers, were there, and all to see President Hayes and his party as they should go through the place on the New York and New England road.

It was June, and the pinkest of roses breathed and blushed in the Franklin gardens. A garland of these had been woven in case there should be a chance to use them; and proud, no doubt, the roses were that they were placed in the hands of a young lady with cheeks as pink as their own, and finally hung by her around the President's neck. For the train stopped, and two or three great men spoke as well as Mr. Hayes; and at last the glory ended in smoke, as the train swept out of sight.

Almost four years had come and gone over Frank-



lin, but no roses had been called out from the pleasant gardens to presidential honors.

One wintry day, however, the small boys found out, as small boys are apt to do, that something was about to happen. Again, a distinguished party was to honor Franklin. This party was to occupy more cars than the presidential party did. It was bound for Chicago, there to be an object of interest for more than four years probably.

Chicago had money and business, and a fine park, and a big fire to boast of, but Chicago was not quite happy: it had not a whale; and hearing one was for disposal in Boston Harbor, had bought the monster. And there it was, "as big as life," though frozen stiff, taking up two cars, and creating, perhaps, as profound a sensation among the boys as the presidential party four years before, with all its speeches and flowers.

Whales are now somewhat out of fashion. What with different burning-fluids and coal-oils, the old poetic "midnight-oil" is out of date. Dress-reform has waged war on the "baleen," and if the whale knows enough to retire from the stage gracefully, he will do so, and not persist in being skinned for the benefit of the world, when he is no longer so very much needed.

FIRST OF HIS AGE.



ANY wonderful men lived in the fifteenth century, but *Leonardo Da Vinci* has been called the first of his age.

He is noted most as an artist, but he also wrote many books. Twelve large volumes are still treasured in the public library of the city where he lived; these are about the arts, chemistry, and mathematics, and are curiously written from right to left, so that it is necessary to use a looking-glass to decipher them.

He was born at Vinci, near Florence, in 1452.

In Italy, which we associate with everything lovely and pleasant, we are not surprised to see many birds. In the Italian cities there are flocks of doves, just such as Hawthorne's Hilda loved to feed.

Then there are trained pigeons, of many varieties, for sale in the market-places, and other birds noted for their plumage or their voice.

The illustration that accompanies this sketch shows the young artist feeding one of these birds.

It is said that he could not bear to see them imprisoned, and that one of his favorite ways of spending money was to buy one of the caged pets, and then, opening the door, share in the bird's ecstasy of liberty.

I have seen a picture of him, where he is represented as much older than in this sketch,—no longer a youth, but a wrinkled and bearded man. But he is still in the market-place buying the birds, and letting them go free.

His painting of "The Last Supper" is called the most famous in the world, and is still treasured in the refectory of the old Dominican Church of *Santa Maria delle Grazie*, for which it was painted.

Da Vinci had no small opinion of his powers, as is shown in a letter he wrote, at the age of thirty-one, to the Duke of Milan, in which, after stating his qualifications as an engineer, architect, etc., he adds: "I will also undertake any work in sculpture, in marble, in bronze, in terra-cotta; likewise in painting I can do as well as any man, be he who he may."

That sounds like a proud challenge, indeed; but who has yet picked up the gauntlet he threw down?

This wonderful man died in France, near Amboise, in May of 1519.

There is almost no end to the wonderful things said of him, one biographer even ascribing to him more than human gifts.



FIRST OF HIS AGE.

But among all the stories of his life there is no sweeter scene than this, where he is looking after the freed bird as it flies toward heaven, while the children look at him with the adoring faces they turn to the pictured saint.



LITTLE BOOTS.



T was a block of yellow-brown houses, looking as much like a sheet of gingerbread as anything.

An expressman had just backed up to No. 21, in that block, and the driver, unloosing ropes here and there, proceeded to unpack the luggage.

"What have we here!" exclaimed Mrs. Bacon, the up-stairs tenant. "A menagerie, I do believe. Come here, John."

There was, indeed, on the top of the load a gray horse that looked in the twilight very real, till one noticed the rockers on which it stood. But there was a kennel, with a live terrier's head at the window, a bird-cage with its fluttering tenant, a crib and high chair besides, suggesting that the folks in the other part might, in the language of Mrs. Bacon, "make music."

Now, the up-stairs tenants—Mr. and Mrs. Bacon—were precise, orderly people, living like many other city folks, in desert-island fashion, and only hoping

LITTLE BOOTS.

that everybody else would mind their own business. It had been for weeks their great comfort that "the other part of the house" was unoccupied; and now, this load of household goods, brimming over with pets and their belongings, was an unwelcome sight.

There were no young Bacons, thank Heaven! Plants did not flourish in their shaded windows, nor canary-birds splash water from their tiny baths upon the clear glass.

No dog barked a noisy welcome when his master returned at night. No cat purred in her mistress' lap. The housekeeping of the Bacons was a fight against dirt, dust, sunshine, and noise.

Somehow, pets bring all these.

"Well, John," said Mrs. Bacon, as she turned from the window, and pulled the shade over the sacred glass, "there's an end to peace and quiet. We must just keep the entry-doors locked, and don't you be whistling or singing 'round to attract a child. 'Give them an inch and they'll take an ell.' If folks must have rocking-horses,—and what goes with them,—they ought to move into the country where they won't be pestering other people."

But to the surprise of the Bacons, they were not "pestered," only by the patter of little feet, or a woman's voice singing cradle-songs or joining in her child's laughter. Crying there was, too, sometimes



LITTLE BOOTS.

but it was so soon hushed in motherly caresses, that it seemed a sort of rainbow-grievance only.

At night, when the father returned, there was, indeed, quite a joyful noise down-stairs, at which times John's face was a little wistful.

But the new family did not intrude for ever so small a favor.

Mrs. Bacon took good care to keep out of sight whenever the new tenants were passing through the entry-way. One small pair of boots had considerable traveling for a stroll on the sidewalk, or to old "Dorchester Heights," just beyond, for spoils of spring flowers. One day, "Little Boots," as Mrs. Bacon had named him, came back from this favorite resort, and strayed, hesitatingly, up the stairs toward her kitchen-door.

"Smells the gingerbread!" soliloquized Mrs. Bacon, grimly. "Glad the door is locked!" She glanced toward it to be sure. Yes, it was locked, though the key had been transferred to another door. But, shining through the key-hole was a very bright and sweet-looking star of an eye. Only a moment it twinkled, and then there was thrust in very gently the stem of a dandelion, and the small boots scampered away down stairs.

"Little mischief!" exclaimed Mrs. Bacon, and she would have pushed the intruding stem outside, but her hands were in the dough, "if he wanted a piece of gingerbread, why didn't he say so? Mebbe he was

LITTLE BOOTS.

afraid of me. Cats run like all possessed when they see me. I can't have my keyholes choked up with dandelion-stems,—that's so! Soon's I get my hands out of this, it will walk into the stove, that dandelion will!"

But the dandelion was so fresh and perfect, and brought right back the old childhood days to Mrs. Bacon, so that she changed her mind.

There was an old horseradish bottle on the pantry shelf, which, filled with water, received the dandelion. There, resting in the kitchen-window, it smiled all day.

There was quite a commotion down-stairs that night, and John and his wife hearing it, thanked their stars that they were not routed by children's ails.

The next day, Mrs. Bacon's watchful ear caught the sound of "Little Boots" on the stairs, and again the blue eye twinkled at the keyhole. This time, the door opened in response.

"Well, child, what is it? Want some gingerbread?"

"Oh, no, thank you, dear," said the little voice,—a very hoarse little voice it was, and the throat was all wrapped in flannel,— "I wanted to know if you liked my f'ower?"

"See!" Mrs. Bacon pointed to the glorified horseradish bottle.

"Is your name Mrs. Bacon, dear?"

LITTLE BOOTS.

"Bacon,—no dear about it!"

"I like to call you 'dear.' Don't your little boy call you so?"

"No."

"Ally! Ally, child!" called the mother, anxiously, "come back, darling, you'll get cold."

"I'll take him down," responded Mrs. Bacon. And taking, with unwonted tenderness, the three-year-old darling, she landed him safe in the lower entry.

"It's the croup," exclaimed the mother.

"He got cold yesterday out for dandelions, his favorite flower,—he calls them 'preserved sunshine.' He saw me preserve fruit last fall,—there's where he got the idea.

"The doctor says he is that kind of child croup will go hard with. It makes me tremble to hear that cough."

"Goose-oil is good," remarked Mrs. Bacon.

"Did you ever try it?" asked the new neighbor, innocently.

"Me! No use for it. Got a bottle, though. Have it, if you like."

Alas! the doctor's prophecy was true. The fatal disease developed that very night.

"Little Boots" are still, and the starry eyes shine far off now.

WHAT RICK BROUGHT FROM HOLLAND.

As he lay in his beautiful, last sleep,—a flower amid the white flowers,—a woman's brown hand slipped a few dandelions tenderly, oh, so tenderly, into the dainty cold fingers.

"That is right, Mrs. Bacon, dear," said the poor mother. "'Preserved sunshine!'—that is what he is to us."

The new tenants have moved into the country, and No. 21, lower tenement, is again to let.

Mrs. Bacon hopes the landlord will add to his advertisement, "No objection to children."

WHAT RICK BROUGHT FROM HOLLAND.



SOME people in Rockland thought Rick was a bad boy, or would be, because he was so rough. If there was a loud shouting in the streets after school, Auntie Barton would say, "Oh, dear! there's Rick, I suppose." She worried all through skating-time, because Rick was sure to venture on the ice, and many times, every winter, he got drowned—almost. She had no more peace in the summer, for there was the swift, bright river, where he loved to swim; and

there was *climbing* to be done in all seasons, Rick thought.

I know it would have been much better if Rick had tried to remember his good aunt's requests. His father and mother were dead, and she was very kind to him.

He was generous and affectionate, but, oh! so forgetful. And as for keeping quiet more than half an hour, Rick said it almost *choked* him.

Perhaps you can guess now what sort of a boy he was in school. He thought punctuation was a bother, invented just to hinder a boy in his reading. As for spelling, he always used the fewest letters possible.

"The idea of it!" said he, one day, to Fred Symmes, "spelling the stuff they make bread of, — *d-o-u-g-h*, — when *do* would tell the story just as well. A fellow can't help missing, with so many useless letters tucked on to the words."

In arithmetic, I'm afraid, he wasn't much better.

"Now, Richard," said Mr. Lufkin, his teacher, one day, "you must be exact. In this example you have been performing, you do not compute the interest right; the amount falls short by six mills. If you are not exact, men will cheat you."

"They would be welcome to *six mills*," said the boy, proudly.

Mr. Lufkin did not like that reply, and punished



the boy, not only for his poor scholarship, but for his impudence.

In geography, however, no one had better lessons, or loved the study more than Rick. He could tell you about all the countries, and their distances from each other. He knew the course a ship should take for any port, and the dangerous passes on every voyage almost as well as an experienced seamen. When he should have been ciphering, he was drawing funny pictures on his slate of the little Esquimaux creeping out of their ice-houses, or of Chinese ladies riding out so fine in their sedan-chairs. Oftener still, he made a ship. He had never seen a real one, for he had never been out of Rockland, which was a little village among the mountains, many miles from the sea. But Rick had serious thoughts of sometime being a sea-captain. And often, when his aunt caught him in what she considered "mere wanton mischief,"—getting into his window by means of her clothes-line,—he was really playing he was a sailor.

Finally, she realized that he was not only a "play sailor," but likely to be a real sailor.

Not every aunt can judge what is a boy's foolish whim, and what is a natural bent for his calling.

Auntie Barton was wise. She did not fret at him when she saw how matters were drifting. He was not tempted to run away; but, in due time, Rick was a sailor-boy, the owner of a blue chest, a com-



fortable sea-outfit, and as happy a heart as ever beat.

It had some fond regrets for Rockland, especially for that part of it that held his aunt's little cottage; but regrets soon faded before a brilliant future as ever sailor-boy painted.

Voyage after voyage was made in safety and success, and as Rick returned for short visits to his native place, it surprised the villagers to see what a noble, reliable man the once "noisy boy" had become. So generous, too! One would think, upon visiting Mrs. Barton's cottage, that Rick's whole end and aim in going to sea was to collect gifts for her. He had brought her a great Bombay chair that looked, in her little parlor, like a stray elephant. The mantel was loaded with pink-lipped shells and jagged corals, and over all were hanging the drollest Chinese fans. In the corners of the room stood furious-looking shark's teeth, whale-bones, and a sword from the sword-fish. Upon the table were many delicate and lovely trifles. Auntie liked best a snow-white wreath of real orange flowers,—you would think at first sight; but look a little nearer; each transparent petal is a tiny shell. "*Beautiful!* Rick," exclaimed auntie; "but do you know it is rather an absurd present for an old woman like me? I will take care of it, dear, and sometime you may place it on a younger head than mine."

A dash of red colored Rick's brown cheek as he

replied, "you will have to keep it many a year, then."

Not only was the parlor crowded with wonders, but every room held some foreign specimen. There were queer bowls and ladles from Russia, chop-sticks from China, and fanciful ware from France.

There was one land, however, not represented, and it had become a standing joke with auntie to say, "What will you bring me from Holland, my dear? A windmill, some gin, or a cheese?"

And Rick would always laugh, and say, "Oh, I'll pick up something yet in Holland."

Rick's vessel—for at last he was captain—was one day towed up the crooked channel to Rotterdam. You can hardly think, unless you have been to sea, how refreshing it is to near land, and see other persons besides the familiar faces on shipboard.

There were several hundred people walking on the common, and they came up to the pier-head of the sluice to see the ship. There were soldiers, naval officers, gentlemen and their wives, nursery-maids and children. Yes, it was delightful to see life on shore again.

Every morning there came on board the pretty milk-maids, looking so quaint and tidy in their short, black gowns and stockings, and white caps upon their heads. Around their necks were buckets of fresh milk, which could be bought at two cents a quart.

These milk-maids have such a rosy, country look, so different from anything in American cities, that they are a pleasing sight to strangers. It was no novelty to Rick, who had been in Rotterdam many times before, and he was now so occupied with his duties that he hardly noticed the pretty milk-venders.

One morning, he heard somebody crying on deck, and found it was a little Danish girl,—one of the milk-maids. A rude boy had kicked her buckets over, and the milk was all lost. "Oh, well," said Dick, gayly, "never cry for spilt milk, you know. How much was it worth, now?"

The little girl would not tell, and would not accept the money that Dick tried to make her take. She was a poor child, but she would not take the money when she had nothing to give for it. She was quite ashamed of her tears, and thanking the captain for his kindness, she walked away.

"Too bad," thought the captain, as he watched the sorrowful little face out of sight. "I will see her to-morrow, and give her full value for the milk she brings."

But she did not come the next morning, nor the next. At last, she appeared, but it was with slow steps, and the small shoes she had worn before were exchanged for brogans.

Richard determined to know the cause. His pleasant manner could not be withstood, and at last the

little milk-maid told her story. She once lived in Denmark, but was then so young she remembered nothing of her life there. Since she lived in Holland she was cared for by an old woman, whom she was taught to call "grandmother." She was a harsh old woman, and whenever Lena displeased her, she would beat her cruelly.

When Lena came from the ship with empty buckets and no money, she seized a thorny stick, and bidding the child take off her shoes and stockings, she lashed her feet till they bled.

On hearing this story, Richard went to see the old woman. She said that Lena was not her child. A captain from Denmark, whose wife had died on the voyage from England to Holland, left the little child with her while he should bring his sister to care for her; but the ship on which he sailed was lost. He never came again. "And so I have had this troublesome elf on my hands ever since," muttered the old crone, "and if anybody has a mind to interfere, they may take the child for good and all."

Richard was impulsive. He turned to Lena, and said, "Will you go home to America with me?"

She did not say *no*! A hasty good-by, some muttered curses from the old woman, and her charge left her for kinder hands.

During the homeward voyage, little Lena was happy, if never before. She learned many useful

things from the stewardess, who was a sort of mother to her. All hands petted her, and hoped she would make the next voyage with them. But Captain Barton had other plans for her. He wanted her to be under the kind care of Auntie Barton, whom he knew would like what he had at last *brought her from Holland.*

Rick left her with his good aunt, and went away on a long, long voyage to China. Far away in strange lands, or on strange seas, he loved to think of the gentle child who had seen so much misfortune and hard usage in her little life, as safe under the same kind, judicious care that had protected his orphan childhood. When the still evening dropped down upon the waves, he loved to think of Lena as taking his old place by the armchair of his aunt, and listening to her sweet, fervent reading of the blessed book which had been the guide of her footsteps through life.

Several years of trading between Antwerp and Brazil kept Rick away from his old home. When he did return, he hardly recognized in the lovely young lady he met at the cottage-door, the sorrowful little milk-maid he once comforted. But soon all changes became familiar, and they talked together like old friends, as they were.

But even Lena's cordial greeting could not make him forget the voice which would never welcome him

again on earth, for his good auntie was dead. Yet it was a solace to know that she was lovingly tended by Lena, and her last words were a blessing upon Lena and Richard.

And now, it may be as well to bring out the bridal shell-wreath, and see if it is as dainty and perfect as in the long-ago, when Rick brought it to his aunt.

"Yes, it looks as if it had just snowed down," Captain Barton says, as he takes it from its satin-lined casket to try the effect against Lena's golden hair.

"Fresh flowers would have been prettier, and more like you," he whispers, "but you will wear these for *auntie's* sake, won't you?"

Captain Barton and his wife went to sea for several years, and are now—for this story is not all "made up"—living in a delightful home, not far from the cottage where they spent so many of their young days.



THE ROBBINS' NEST.



UCH was the name of the delightful home where a family lived who spelled their name with two *b*'s. But if they had worn feathers, and sung in their cherry-trees, they could not have been more charming.

These were Mr. and Mrs. Robbins, and their twin daughters, Prue and Patty, now about eleven years old.

In the city, you know, Mr. Brown's house, and Mr. Smith's house, and Mr. Jones's house, on the same street, are generally just so tall and so wide. All the parlors have the same shaded and unsocial look as you go by. There's very little but the door-plate to tell one house from another.

But, in the country, the home is apt to take on the character of the people that live in it; and the Robbins' Nest just told you at a glance what you might expect.

The open gate, the pleasant porch overhung with vines,—not too much overhung, though,—the sun-



flowers shining like so many beacon-lights under the window and above the low stone wall, on the top of which a board was laid, "just to invite tramps!" Prue declared.

"Of course, tired people will want to sit there," said good Mrs. Robbins, "and I couldn't see them taking cold on the chilly stones,—of course, I couldn't!"

Little Patty was her mother's own child, and many a mug of milk had she brought to "tired people" resting on the wall.

One autumn night, the Robbins family sat around their fireside. It was late for country bed-time, long past nine, but Mr. Robbins hated, he said, to cover up the coals, they looked so cheerful.

And so the little group lingered there, Prue and Patty amusing themselves by counting "mother's pensioners," as they called the chance-comers that had enjoyed in any way the comforts of the Robbins' Nest that day.

"First," began Prue, "was 'Aunt Jinnie,' with eggs to sell, and mother bought them, though our egg-basket was full and running over."

"Yes, miss," retorted Patty, "and just as she was going you reminded mother that there was a lonesome piece of pie in the buttery, and so mother brought other things, and gave Aunt Jinnie a regular spread. Then came Reliance Snow to beg one of mother's last winter's dresses," continued Patty.

"Yes, and when she tried it on, she had the impudence to say that 'it *become*' her better than it did 'Mis Robbins,' because she—Reliance—was more 'slim and genteel.'"

"Oh, well, poor creature!" said Mrs. Robbins, "Reliance must be pardoned for thinking well of herself. She has no one else to think well of her."

"'*Self-Reliance*' would be a good name for her," remarked Mr. Robbins.

"Only," added Prue, "that she begs so much."

"Then came one of Patty's tramps," said the mother.

"Yes, and such a nice old man," said Patty. "He looked as if he had just stepped out of an old picture, with his long stockings and knee-breeches."

"Oh, I can tell you who he is," said Mr. Robbins. "He is a gentle, old, insane man from the poor-house, and must have escaped when Temperance Ann left there to come here. Count her for another 'pensioner,' girls."

Temperance Ann Lippincott, who was then comfortably sleeping in the "Robbins' Nest," was a town-pauper, and blind besides.

Nobody else ever thought of inviting the poor woman to visit them; but every fall, when fruit was ripe, Mrs. Robbins sent to the poor-house for Temperance Ann, and gave her one week of delight.

"Might as well say, 'good-night,' before it is 'good-

morning,'" said Mr. Robbins, at last; "there will be no more callers to-night." He had hardly spoken when there was a rap at the door.

"Mother," said he, returning from answering the summons, "there's a wounded soldier here, but I don't know whether he's Union or Rebel. Best to let him in?"

Mrs. Robbins hastened to the door, when her reproachful, "Why, Augustus," prepared the twins for one of "father's jokes." There upon the door-stone was the homeliest dog that ever howled, holding up a wounded leg, with pathetic appeal.

"Yes, ma'am. That's the General, and I suppose he must come in," went on Mr. Robbins, "but Temperance Ann has got the guest-chamber."

"Stop your nonsense, Augustus, do!" said his wife, as she tenderly raised this last pensioner in her arms, and bore him to the kitchen, followed by the rest of the family.

There she carefully dressed the wounded member, and made a comfortable bed for the "General."

"Now, poor fellow," said she, "if it were not that getting hurt brought you here, I should be altogether glad you came, for your obliging me to go to the kitchen reminds me that I have not mixed bread to-night. And, Augustus, while I am about it, how would you like to have me mix some 'election-cake,' such as your mother used to make?"

"Jolly," he replied, "but doesn't it take forever to make it?"

"Oh, no! It must be put to rise, of course, to-night, like bread, and to-morrow night it will be ready to cut."

"And 'twill keep no end of time, I believe?"

"Yes, sir," said Prue, "if you keep away from the cake-box."

So that night a batch of election-cake, carefully covered with folded linen, was placed near the stove, where it could "rise" during the night.

On the other side of the stove, in his cosy bed, nestled the "General."

"Now, now, Martha! I protest," exclaimed Mr. Robbins, as he and his wife were making their usual rounds, to see that everything was locked up for the night, "too many good things near the stove. Anyway, the kitchen is no place for a dog to sleep in."

"Well, Augustus," said Mrs. Robbins, gently, "I will make him a bed in the wood-shed, poor fellow!"

That night came the first frost of the season. Bitter cold it was. Mrs. Robbins heard the sharp wind, and sighed, as she always did, at the thought of the poor sailors. Then she heard a sharper cry than the wind, and down-stairs she flew so lightly that she did not wake her sleeping husband, and took the wounded General from his exile among the wood, into the warm kitchen.

She had it in mind to get up first in the morning, and put the dog back in the shed. But Mr. Robbins was ahead of her that time. Hardly had he opened the kitchen-door, when he was heard to laugh violently, and call to Prue and Patty to hurry down-stairs before their mother.

All three entered the room at once, and saw the "General" curled up on the top of the election-cake! Doubtless, the soft linen that covered it struck him as specially good sheets.

Mrs. Robbins gently removed him to his own bed, and uncovered the cake. "He didn't touch it, poor fellow," said she, "but it was such a cold night, it didn't rise."

"Didn't rise!" exclaimed her husband. "No cake, with any spirit, would."

"Why, Augustus," said Mrs. Robbins, who could never see a joke, "there wasn't any spirit in it. It is just as good as ever," she repeated, "only needs a little soda to raise it."

"Mark my words," said Mr. Robbins, "nothing but gunpowder will ever raise that cake."

The twins followed their father to the gate that morning with doleful news. "Mother has invited Temperance Ann to stay another week, as a special treat," said Prue.

"I don't object to her because she is homely and blind, poor thing!" chimed Patty, "but she's uncanny."

She hears quicker than a hound. She clips through the house ten times faster than we can that see. It's dreadful to hear her race round in the night, without any lamp."

"We always have some object here. I do wish mother wasn't quite so good."

"Well, well, daughters," said their boyish father, with mock gravity, "we must try to put up with your mother's goodness; it is not a common failing. Be patient, and I'll take the whole family,—Temperance Ann, too, of course,—to hear the Hutchinsons this evening. That will please all hands. Wonder if mother will smuggle the General in under her shawl?"

When the family returned from the concert, it was very late, and they were so tired they all went to bed at once.

Mrs. Robbins delayed, only, as she expressed it, to "throw an eye" into the kitchen to see that the General was comfortable in his bed. She would take it for granted, she said, that the doors and windows were fastened.

The best of housekeepers forgot that she did not button a window at supper-time, which she opened then for the smoke of the fried oysters to escape.

That midnight, the General gave a cry of alarm. Temperance Ann's quick ear had heard a stealthy, unusual sound before he barked; and sooner than any

one could strike a light, her swift feet were down in the kitchen, and her strong arms had seized a chair, and were belaboring a stout burglar, till he begged for mercy.

The General, meanwhile, had roused the neighborhood, and "Slippery Sim," who had long been a terror in that part of Maine, was soon in the lock-up.

Henceforth, good Mrs. Robbins had this little story to tell whenever she wished to plead that every creature, however repulsive or unfortunate, is good for something.

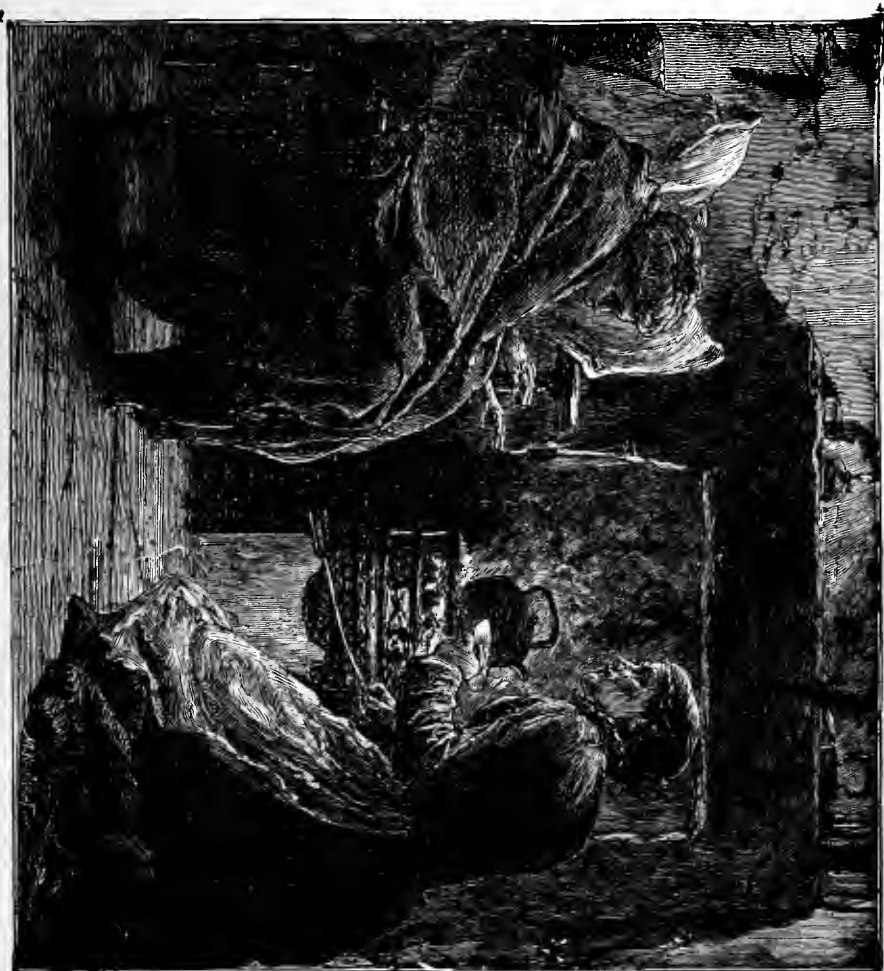
THE LITTLE HERO



RY or dip-toast, Dimmie?" said the kind mother, cheerily. It seemed to the sick boy, as he lay curled up in the easy-chair with pillows and blankets, that there was never anything so cosy and comforting as home.

What other grate, what other tipsy tea-kettle,—above all, what other bright, gentle mother was ever so dear as his own?

On the other hand, "what boy," thought his mother, "was ever so patient and brave as little Dimmie?"



THE LITTLE HERO.

It was an absurd little nick-name for "James," and an unlikely-looking boy for a hero; but hero he was, as you shall see.

There were three older boys in this family, all handsome and strong. Tom, big and tall, with close-cropped auburn hair, and eyes to match, with a quick-tempered flash in them; Dick, a beauty, with his black curls, and dark, soft eyes; Harry, another style of good looks, with complexion that "never should have been wasted on a boy," the Riverdale young ladies said.

And next in age came little Dimmie, with his small, pitiful face, and fair temples, where pain had brought out too plainly the "tender stain" of the veins beneath.

He was as manly and bold at heart as any brother of them, as full of merry life and fun. He could get as much solid enjoyment, so the boys said, in watching a game of base-ball from the kitchen-window, as if he were on the first nine himself.

The brothers loved him, and made fun of him, and pitied him, and *would* call him "little Dimmie," instead of James or "Jim," as he would have liked. But he was so much a hero that teasing had not soured him, — he was bigger than his name.

Years went on. The older boys entered college one by one, and came home in vacations, the admiration of the pale little fellow. But he was in better health

THE LITTLE HERO.

than in his younger days, and was now, at fifteen, a busy, unselfish boy, meaning to make the most of what strength he had.

Through the village of his home swept a broad river. In summer, it lay like a dreaming beauty, with visions of bright skies on its breast; but, in winter, it was a prisoner chained in ice.

In spring, it rose with a dreadful strength, and broke the ice into blocks like marble.

One March, the rain had fallen, day after day, with tiresome persistency. The evening of the fourth day came, still there was no break in the heavy clouds.

By the pleasant grate sat Mrs. Arnold, — Dimmie's mother, — busy with her knitting. Near by, at the round table, was Dimmie, reading. Between them, on the gay, braided mat, slept the old gray cat, but her dreams seemed uncanny. She would start uneasily, and often leave her warm bed, dart to the window, and peer out with excited eyes.

Dimmie, at last, followed her example, curious to see what roused pussy from her slumbers.

He had not reached the window, when a subdued roar — which was not the roar of the wind — startled him, and made his mother turn pale.

"Poor Una!" she exclaimed, "how lonely she will be this dreadful night!"

The Arnolds' home was among the hills, safely away from the river; but in this prospect of the ice

breaking up, Mrs. Arnold's heart went out quickly toward any that might be in danger; and, first, she remembered her friends, the Hathorns.

They were a family of little ones, quite by themselves this stormy night. The mother had died the summer before, and Una, the eldest girl, had well taken her place in caring for the five little sisters and brother, and making the small house comfortable for her father.

He was the toll-keeper, but their cottage was not, as is usually the case, just at the end of the toll-bridge.

"Remember, Una," her father had many times said, "we are far beyond high-water mark. The liveliest cake of ice never jumped within gun-shot of our shed-window."

Una recalled these familiar words with comfort to-night, as she trotted around the bright little rooms, tucking the children in their beds, and then nestled in the mother's old chair to rock Baby-Blue to sleep. For she was father, mother, and toll-keeper, all in one, to-night.

Two or three days before, her father had received a very important letter, making it necessary for him to go at once to New York, to verify that he was the William Hathorn who married Anne More, formerly of Birmingham, England.

Strange things really do happen, sometimes, in this work-a-day world, and the possibilities that now

seemed to shine upon him and his little ones, he had confided to Una. Therefore, as darling Baby-Blue drooped his curly head on sister's shoulder, she was building the most golden air-castles. Not living at all in the little red toll-house was she; not feeling her loneliness; not noticing the rising storm; not thinking of danger.

In their little beds—securely as sparrows in their nest—sleepily twittered the small Hathorns, and all the while the roaring river, and the ice-monsters, were coming nearer,—nearer.

“Dimmie,” urged Mrs. Arnold, “don’t go out in the storm. Everybody that is within danger will have known enough to get out of it to-day. Una and the children are lonesome, I know, but the toll-house is safe. Whatever you do, though, Dimmie, don’t attempt to cross the bridge. And, *please*, dear, don’t go out at all; there’s nothing you can do, you know, only to get one of your neuralgic attacks.”

But Dimmie, dutiful on most occasions, could no more be stayed, when there was any prospect of peril or need, than if he had been Tom, Dick, or Harry.

He kissed his mother for reply, and ran toward the noisy waters.

A crowd of villagers lined the river-bank, and just as Dimmie reached there, a fearful crash was heard, and down went the bridge, as if it were a child’s toy. It seemed to every one that looked on as if the river

and the ice clapped their hands, and that in the wild roar was a sound of laughter.

In another moment, the ice-creatures — you could call them nothing less — swam toward the banks, and crowded, climbing one upon another, for something else to satisfy their fury. Many a tree they uprooted and bore downward. Then, clutching nearer, they seized some small cottages, whose poor dwellers had left days before. And now, nearer still they crowded, beyond the highest water-mark yet known.

And now, — now they aimed at the little toll-house, where Una sung to the baby, while her brother and sisters slept without a dream of fear.

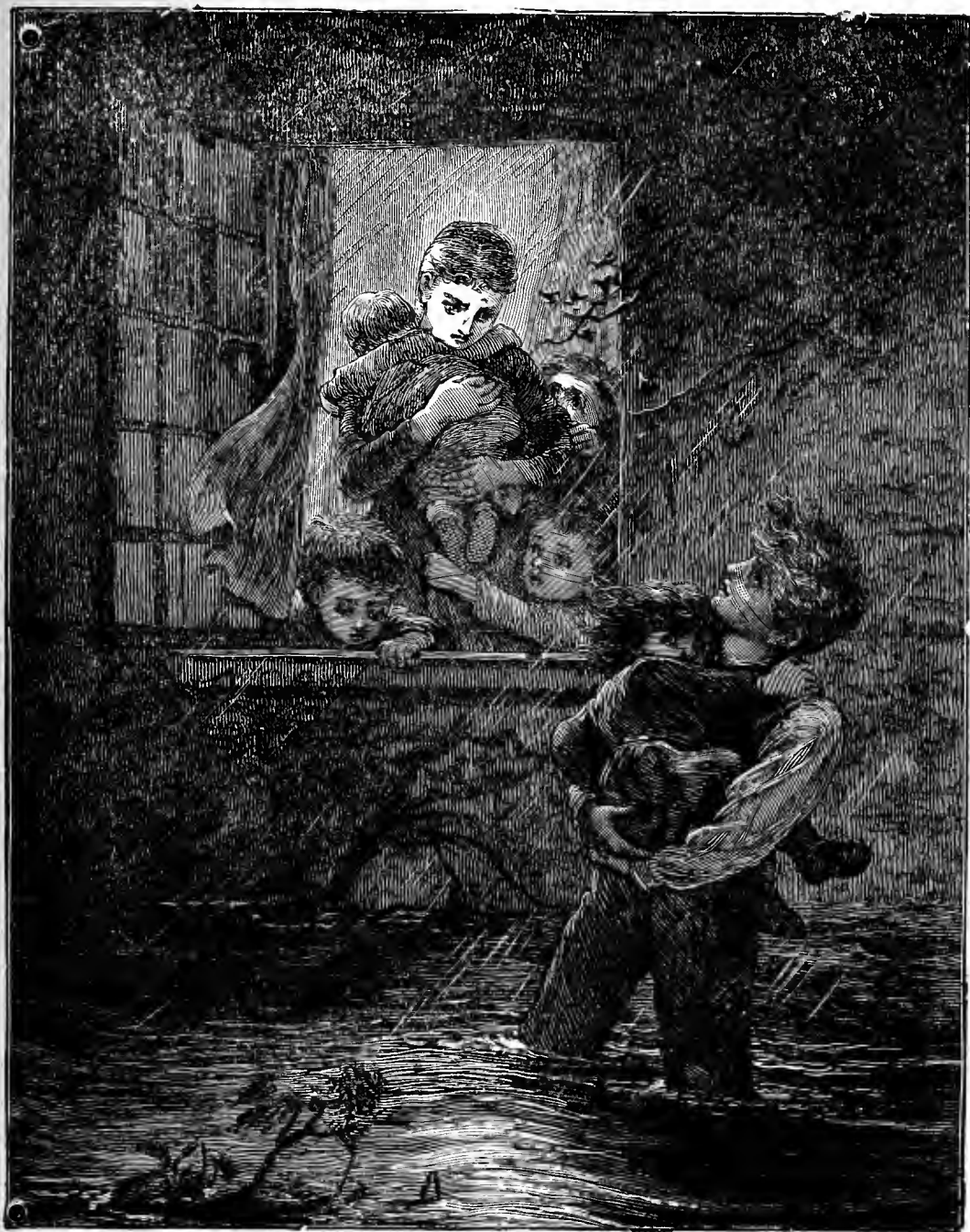
The force of the river-current had already swept above and around the cottage, leaving it on a temporary island, as a headland still beat off a nearer approach.

But how to save the little family?

No boat could make its way through the ice-crowded waters. The distance was too great to throw a rope, if, indeed, the children could be made to use it.

What should be done?

On the rocky headland, now included in the island where the toll-house stood, was a big oak-tree, where Dimmie and Una, and all the other village children, had played. Dimmie remembered how its old roots, tougher than cables, were woven into the ground in



every direction. He thought that, strong as the ice was, the old oak was probably stronger.

A long rope had been brought to the bank. Dimmie suggested that one end should be secured, and a stout basket swung on it; then he seized the other end, and before one had a chance to say "why do ye so?" he was leaping, "like chain-lightning," as the admiring boys said, from cake to cake of the dreadful ice.

But now that he had gained the headland in safety, his perplexities were not over. A stealthy arm of the river had suddenly wound itself about the little home.

Although swift the current, Dimmie could judge by the bright little windows of the toll-house that the stream was not beyond his depth. Wading manfully through it, he startled, with his knock, the sleeping children, and, in less than a minute, they were all at the opened window, sweet Una holding Baby-Blue, who still slept as if there was no danger.

One by one did Dimmie take the children in his arms, and wade to the old oak, where each, in turn, was safely swung across.

There was great cheering over the rescued party, and over the rescuer. Everybody wanted the dear children in their homes. They could no more go back to the little toll-house, which was now in fragments floating down the stream.

THE LITTLE HERO.

Dimmie would not give up one of his trophies. He brought them to his own home, where news had gone before him, and Widow Arnold was ready with every comfort possible.

William Hathorn, formerly toll-keeper, found himself a millionaire in consequence of the fortune bequeathed to him from relatives of his late wife.

As he neared home, fearful rumors reached him. First, was a wild tale that the little toll-house, and all he held dear, were swept away by the cruel ice.

Hours later, he read a true account, which withheld the name of the hero.

"Whoever he may be," said Mr. Hathorn, "he shall share my fortune."

Mr. Hathorn kept his word, and, in good time, provided means for setting up Dimmie in a business which he has made to prosper in as "level-headed" a way as if he were as tall and as strong as his brothers.

One curious fact was, that, from the night of the freshet, "Dimmie" was always called "*James*."

Where his strength came from that fearful night, was a mystery to most of his friends.

But his mother said, "There's a divine power, called unselfishness. If ever a boy had that, he has, and it is that which took him out of himself, and put his hand in God's for help."

FLYAWAY.

"Pooh! said the family doctor, "James always had a vast deal of nervous energy and will-power."

Very likely; but I think his mother came nearer the truth.

FLYAWAY.



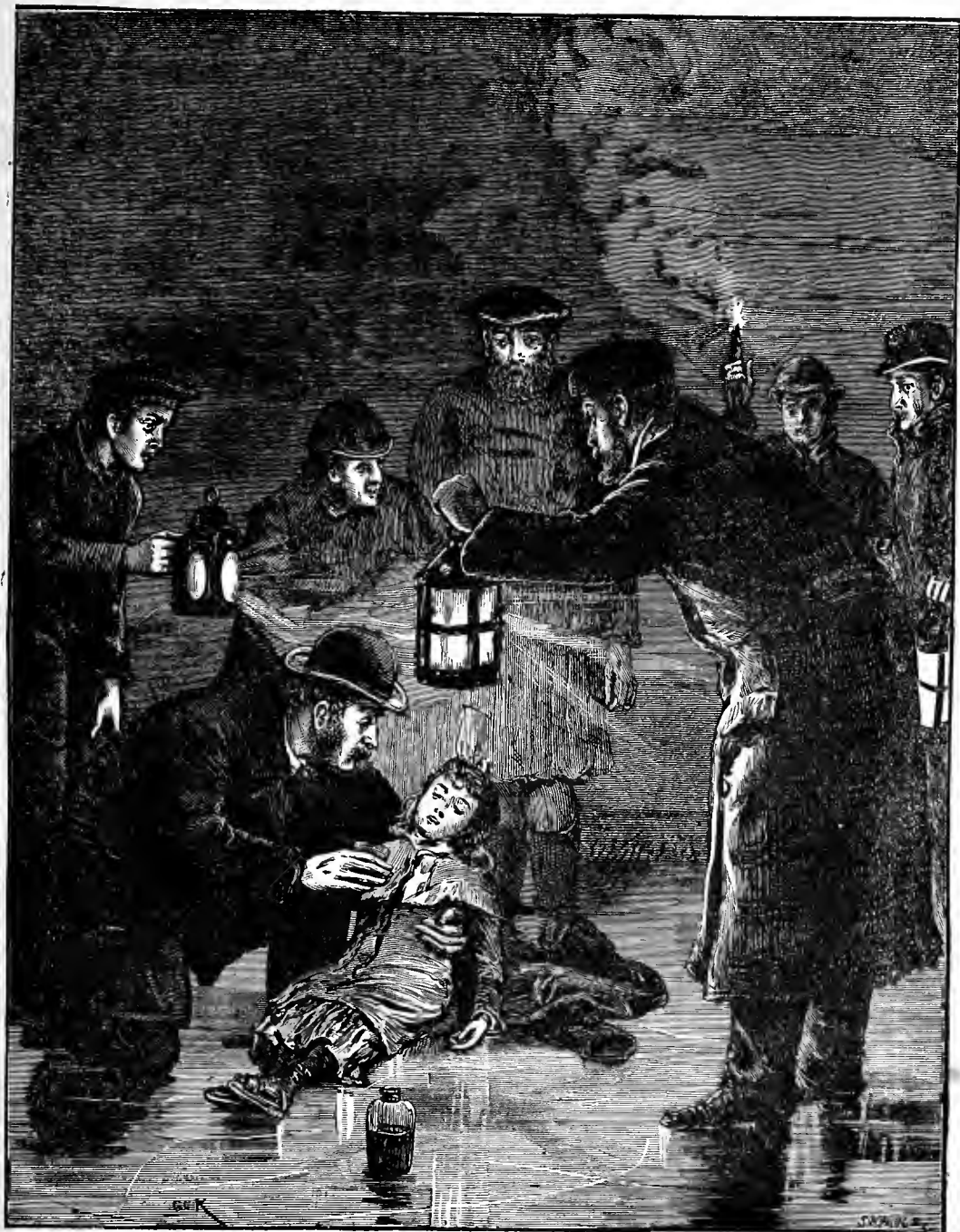
T was gay midwinter in Montreal.

In-doors, one could be shut in with all the comforts that Canadian winter makes so sweet.

Out-doors, the young folks were driving off in sleighs, riding on the still more bewitching toboggin, or gliding about on skates.

It was a charming life to little Fanny MacIvor, who had not seen snow nor ice since her forgotten babyhood.

Privately, she thought it great fun to be an orphan, else she would never have been taken from her native home to live in Florida with Aunt Anstice; and then, under the care of Aunt Charlotte and her husband, have gone to sea; and, finally, have been adopted by Uncle Matt, and brought to this most delightful Montreal.



Fanny was, indeed, different from most children,—to go from one place to another without a regret; to be petted by one relative, and then rush, just as delighted, to the arms of a new one.

Her adopted parents—Dr. Matthew MacIvor and his good wife—were very proud of the pretty child, but they soon found that her name of “Fanny Fly-away” was deserved.

The child had no idea of time, or distance, or promises.

“Fanny must have some big scare to shock her into good behavior,” thought her uncle.

She was delighted to go with her friends to watch the skaters on the rinks, and was soon the owner of skates herself, winning the admiration of all who saw her.

A daring thought came into her mind one day. Rinks were all very well, but how would it seem to have a river all to one's self, comparatively? She knew, of course, that she ought not to go without permission, but the little girl had a conscience that was very easily put to sleep. “I can be home to dinner. I know how to skate. Uncle Matt will think I am brave.”

Off she went.

The air was sparkling, and when Fanny had buckled on her “wings,” as she called her skates, no bird was gayer, for a while. But when the December sun was

near the end of his short circuit,—when the blue was all gone from the sky, and it looked as white and cold as the ice itself,—then little Flyaway thought of home.

She had skated down stream so merry and swift, she was not aware of the great distance she had come. But now that she had turned about, the Ottawa seemed *such* a hopeless length, and so very far off the shining roofs of the city!

Meanwhile, within Uncle Matt's bright dining-room the five o'clock dinner was spread.

Such warmth and comfort there, though over the windows Jack Frost had woven more delicately rich lace than that which drooped from beneath the crimson lambrequins.

An hour before, Aunt Elsie had found that little Flyaway was missing. As her skates were missing, too, it was not hard to guess that they were taking the little girl on her favorite amusement. So two of the servants were sent in different directions to the rinks she had frequently visited, to bring her home.

There was a look of annoyance, but not of anxiety, upon Aunt Elsie's gentle face. She had no doubt that Fanny would be back directly. So, too, thought Uncle Matt, wishing only that his pet were there just then, the cold was so bitter without, and it was so very comfortable within. The table richly set with the old MacIvor plate and china; the venison so perfect a

brown; the savory vegetables and dainty jellies so inviting; the tea-pot such a picture of comfort, nestling in its quilted "cozy," after the fashion of Canadian tea-pots.

At last, the dinner was over. The servants came home, but no Flyaway. The police were notified; no little girl like Fanny had been seen on the rinks that afternoon.

Meanwhile, cold and frightened, the little girl was making her way up river. It was not a night for skating. Too cold and dark. The moon was off duty to-night, and there were cloudy bags of snow-storms packed between the earth and the stars.

Only by the light from dwellings along the river banks could the tired wings now flutter.

"Al—most home," faltered the frightened runaway, as she at last saw the welcome gleam of lanterns not far away. These belonged to a party of fishermen returning from their daily task of fishing beneath the ice. A boy, lagging behind this party, noticed the little, staggering figure, but thought it must, of course, have company not far off. At any rate, he was too cold and hungry to concern himself about it.

Reaching land, not long after, he was reminded of the lonely little one, for he saw an anxious crowd just setting forth upon the river in search of a lost child, they said. The boy, full of remorse for his selfishness, dashed down the river again, and flinging back

a hearty, "Come on ! I've found her!" to the troubled hearts behind, he was soon with her.

But, ah, poor, still, little Flyaway ; no longer flying, or even fluttering, she had sunk upon the ice, with a face as white and as cold as her unfriendly pillow.

Quickly, Pierre, the fisher-boy, placed his warm overcoat about her, and then the searching-party came up. Dr. MacIvor knelt beside his lost darling, and strove to force brandy between the cold lips. It was of no use. She lay as impassive as marble, and when she was brought into the house, the chill of death seemed to enter it too.

But the doctor could not give the child up. Hour after hour he worked over her, till, at midnight, the hidden breath of life stole faintly forth.

If you could see now the modest Canadian young lady, known as "Miss MacIvor," you would never dream that *she* was the "Flyaway" that once ran off on skates, and was found on the Ottawa almost frozen to death.



"THE MOST RESPECTABLE OF ANIMALS."



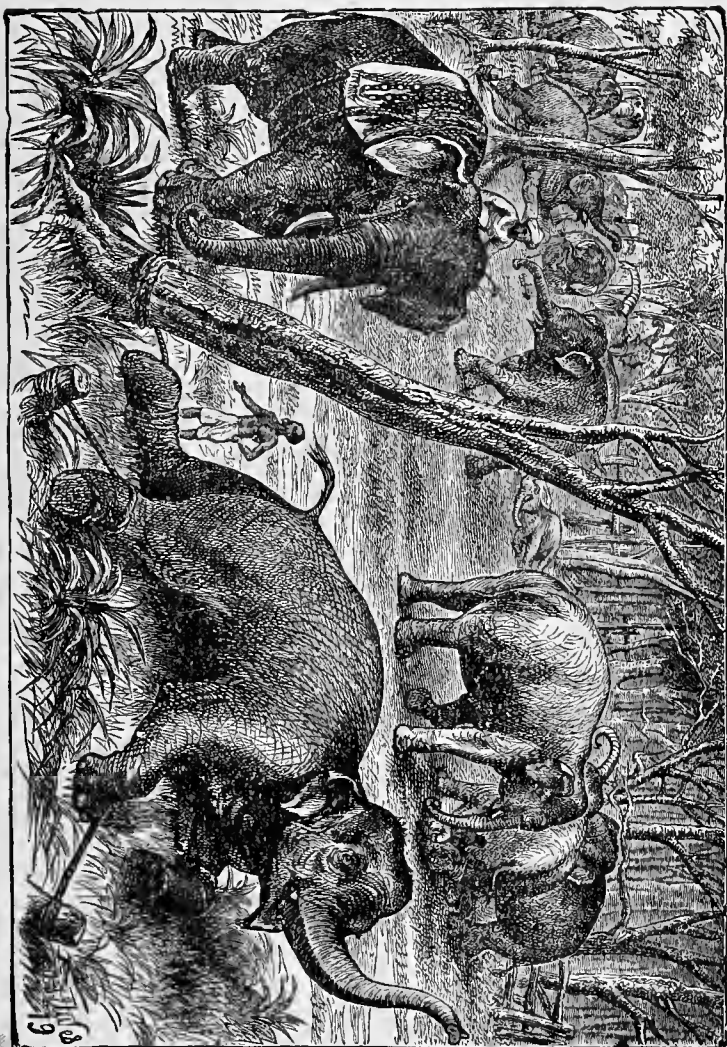
HIS is what the elephant is called in a certain book of natural history I have seen. He is even said to be more dignified than man, and less given to tempers.

In this illustration, however, he has a furious look, as if he were ready to eat some one up, and were going to step right on to that poor little colored person.

But, wait a moment. "Appearances are deceitful," you know. To begin with, the poor little colored person is a high-born prince, son of an African ruler. It is true, that the elephant had so far forgotten to be respectable, that he had become angry.

Even an elephant will turn when you tread on him. The poor animal had been teased till he could bear it no longer, and breaking loose from the *comac*, as his keeper is called, he rushed out to hurt somebody.

But the special horror that makes the dark faces almost turn pale is not fear for themselves. Little Dahomey, every body's pet, the son of their chief, in



his hurry to escape, has stumbled right in the elephant's way.

Old Zanzibar, the faithful body-guard of the emperor, risks his own life, and bends forward to raise the child.

But he might have spared his heroics. Don't you see that the elephant, enraged as he is, has drawn back one great foot? Step on Dahomey? Of course he wouldn't! If this picture were a panorama instead of one scene, you would, by this time, behold Dahomey laughing in Zanzibar's arms, the elephant's trunk several degrees lower, and the keeper, with many a commending pat, chaining the "most respectable animal" in his usual place again.

In their native jungles, elephants herd together. They are social creatures, bathe in company like other social beings at Newport or Nahant. They prefer their native land, and do not care to join a great moral show.

The unwilling captive, in this little sketch, does not enjoy the prospect of seeing America.

He looks ready to sing, "There's no place like home."

When, however, the elephant has been trained, he rather enjoys being looked at. He shows a decided love for gay trappings, and is a very interesting and teachable pet.

You hardly need a picture here to illustrate a third



scene in the elephant's life. That is, how he appears when he has been trained, and can be seen for "fifty cents, children half price."

In the gay summer time, the fields, with their buttercups and daisies, are not brighter than the walls, old barns, and tall fences, all through the country, with their red and yellow animals soon to appear in the coming caravan.

Years ago, a group of little children were on their way to school, and stopped, delighted, at the bright pictures of the wonders soon to be seen at Blueberry Hill.

The next day, Laura Sise, the shoemaker's daughter; Fred and Mel, the Doctor's boys; Pussie Curtis, the dressmaker's little girl; and Gus and Gracie, the washerwoman's twins, boasted that *their* parents had said that they might go to the caravan and circus.

Lysander Dickerman—a good widow's only son—could see "the animals," if he wouldn't go to the circus part.

But one sad little face, usually the brightest, drooped wretchedly in the depths of her new "Shaker."

It was little Temple Wentworth's, the deacon's daughter. When she asked, at home, if *she* could go, her father's eyebrows went up in the astonished way that Temple knew so well.

There was no more to be said.

Perhaps if a little more *had* been said by way of

explanation or comfort, it would have taken off the harsh edge of refusal, and not left quite such a restless little heart thumping away under Temple's brown gingham.

But restless and rebellious it was, and I am sorry to say that the more Temple thought about it, the naughtier did she get.

The next day was Sunday, and in the little country church which the Wentworths attended, a collection was taken up for the "A. B. C. F. M."

Temple could recollect when she did not know so much as she did *this* summer, and used to wonder why the rest of the alphabet were not remembered.

Now, of course, she was quite interested in the heathen; had even attempted a mission vegetable-bed, which, somehow, did not succeed half so well as when she had one, on shares with Brother Blake, for pocket-money.

But, to-day, her interest in the heathen was gone. When the claims of foreign lands were urged, it only made her think of the wonderful animals that had come from those far-off countries.

All the village could see them but Temple, because she was a "deacon's daughter."

Church was over. The parson and the deacons counted the "shekels," as Blake called the silver and nickel-pieces. Then they were carefully tied up in the

silk handkerchief which Mr. Wentworth wore in the top of his tall hat, much to Temple's amusement.

Now, she was just in that restless state of mind when a wicked thought is pretty sure to whisper something.

Temple, alas! listened, and resolved to do just this:—

To excuse herself from the supper-table before the rest of the family; to go to her father's desk where he always put the church-collections over Sunday night; to steal a silver quarter, and go to the circus!

Could you imagine that of a pretty child, with brown eyes "as clear and honest as a brook," as her teacher said?

Just that did naughty Temple. Nor was that all. The Christmas before, good Mrs. Wentworth received for her little daughter a puzzling gift from Mrs. Deliverance Temple, the old lady for whom little Temple was named. It was not a suitable gift, yet Mrs. Wentworth could not pain the kind heart of the giver by declining it. This present was the gayest little frock. It was made of canary-colored cashmere, cut with low neck and short sleeves, and trimmed heavily with gold and silver braid. "It looks about as much like the rising sun as anything I ever saw," said Blake.

Temple admired it. She never dared ask to wear it. She felt that the dress was not approved of in the family.

Now that she had gone so far, — oh, so wretchedly far! as to steal the missionary-money, — why not go a little farther?

Monday morning, before school, she darted into her mother's room, and no one being there to see what she did, she took from the wardrobe the bright little frock, bundled it up in a big piece of brown paper, and was off.

Many children were also bound for the caravan and circus, for this was the opening day. To the surprise of them all, she joined them. It was a comfort to confess a part of her naughtiness to Laura Sise, her intimate friend.

To her she told what she had in the big bundle.

Laura was not the best sort of a friend for little Temple. "Good enough!" said Laura. "If you hadn't helped yourself, you never would have had a chance to wear it. Come right down behind the willows and put it on!"

Laura's admiration was so great that little Temple's head was quite turned; but Laura's words were nothing compared to the sensation she made in the tent. Temple Wentworth was a brilliant child even in her Shaker and brown gingham, but dressed in so much gold and silver, her brown curls, lovely eyes, and pink cheeks, "just looked as if they were in a gilt frame," Laura declared.

The people elbowed and crowded to get a nearer

look at this dazzling little girl, sure that she was "*Mademoiselle* Fairy Feza," the wonderful rope-dancer. Then, when the invitation to the children was given to ride on the elephant!—when the charming man with the long whip spoke to *her*, and said, "Won't the little beauty, with the gold dress, ride?"

It was too much. Little Temple was fairly dizzy with the delightful flattery. She disdained any help in climbing up the steps to the elephant's back; and then, alas! how it happened nobody quite knew, but she had fallen and cut her head, quite severely, against the sharp corner of one of the rude settees.

Meanwhile, the good deacon had been to Boston, handed in his contribution at the missionary rooms, and was concerned to find that there was a quarter less than he had made out the amount to be the day before.

He had returned on the noon train, and looked up with gentle, disapproving eyes at the noisy crowd surging from the circus-grounds.

But what was this? They were turning up Apple-Blossom Lane, where his little brown cottage stood.

The deacon ran now, and there at his door saw some men just taking in poor, naughty Temple, faint and hurt, dressed in gold and silver, and covered with sawdust.

She recovered from the wound, and she earned a

quarter herself, and put it in the mission-box; but, for years, *that elephant* left a sore place in her heart.

To this day, he does not seem to her "the most respectable of animals."

A VALE OF TEARS.



DID you ever see two more forlorn-looking boys than these?

Christmas-tide is near. Mother-earth is royally wrapped in her ermine. Brooks, river, and ponds are pearl. The air has that crisp tingle that makes skating a delight, and home, solid comfort. Why, then, such sad faces?

The question is easily answered, so far as the beggar-boy is concerned. Want, — shivering, starving, cringing want, — possesses him — clothes, body, soul.

But poor Jerry's miserable days are about to be exchanged for something better.

Jack — the discontented-looking boy with the skates — goes with him to a comfortable farm-house near by, where Jerry is not only refreshed with warm milk, bread and cheese, but is hired as chore-boy, and his days of mourning are ended.





The world still looks to Jack as hard and puzzling as before.

If Jack's troubles were want, or bereavement, or illness!—"Dear me!" he thought, "if it were anything but the absurd thing it is!"

And then he fell to brooding over it again, and wondering how upon earth he should get out of this scrape which, after all, was not so perplexing as he supposed.

Jack, you must know, was an academy-boy, and boarded at a certain Widow Dunning's, whose yellow boarding-house edged the sidewalk on Main Street. Jack's room was the very desirable front square chamber, from which, with a bit of looking-glass, he could send provoking lances of sunlight into the milliner's windows opposite, besides seeing all the passing in the little village. That morning, he had made a rousing fire in his air-tight stove, and, boy-like, forgot about the drafts till the room was unbearably hot. Then he opened the window, and sat down by it, in youthful recklessness of "catching cold."

He was enjoying the delight of making out a Christmas-list. The money was in his pocket, the dear names of his friends were on the paper, and now he had just to write opposite each the gift he had in mind to bestow. A happy, generous-looking boy was he, writing off this list: "Father, fur gloves; mother, willow-chair; Hal, moss agates; Nina"—"oh, my pen is getting dry!"

A hasty dash toward the ink-bottle, and — over it went, out the window!

"Lucky it did not fall on to the widow's carpet; but, oh, dear! what if it did any damage outside?"

Jack leaned out of the window, and then jerked his head in again. If the ink had fallen over him, he could not have worn a darker expression; for what a sight met his eyes!

That malicious ink-bottle had just landed plumb on "a perfect love of a bonnet," — white felt, with a magnificent ostrich-feather, once white, but now suddenly changed to mourning!

Jack was aware that the owner of this unlucky hat must be Miss Marian Hallett, whom his older brother, Maurice, admired when he was an academy-boy three or four years ago. Now, Maurice was a business-man in New York, and Miss Hallett just graduated from Vassar, and supposed to be indifferent to academy-boys.

It was a half-holiday, and Jack put aside the unfinished Christmas-list, and started off for a skate, hoping to throw off his heavy-heartedness.

It was all of no use trying to get rid of it in that way, of course. There was but one way out of the trouble, — the straightforward and manly one.

Jack unbuckled his skates, after a short trial, and marched bravely up to Judge Hallett's door.

If it wasn't something of a cannon for a sensitive boy to face!

He inquired if Miss Hallett were in, and was terribly scared for a minute or two to find that she "would be down directly."

A charmingly pretty young lady was Miss Hallett, as she came into the parlor without a shadow of vexation upon her sweet face.

Jack offered his apology, and then, in awkward fashion, put his purse, with its Christmas-money, into her hand.

"Why, why! you must not do that! Just let me say a word or two about that hat,"—and the young lady laughed merrily.

"I was never so glad of anything in my life, Master Jack. You are Jack Emmons, I believe," she added, with a deepening pink in her cheeks. "You must know I disliked that felt hat. It was a present, so I felt obliged to wear it occasionally. But I don't like 'a saucy Gainsborough' for any one, least of all, for myself. I felt as conspicuous as a white elephant in it. I call it a fortunate accident that has relieved me from wearing it again. And, Jack, I think it was very nice of you to come here to own up about it. I know of somebody who will be glad to hear this of you.

"By the way, do you know you did another good deed this morning? I chanced to call at Farmer

Mosely's just after you had brought that half-starved boy to them. A mutual benefit, I am sure, for they need a boy, and he needs a home."

Jack was quite comforted, and in the midst of Miss Hallett's remarks, he wondered who the "somebody" could be that she referred to.

The mystery was solved at Christmas. One of Jack's gifts was a long ostrich-feather, somewhat curiously sprinkled with black. There was attached to it a dainty card:—

"TO JACK EMMONS;

"For not showing 'the white feather.'

"From his new sister,

"MARIAN HALLETT EMMONS."

You must imagine the two heroes, now at the end of this sketch, far happier than they were at the beginning,—Jerry, comfortably clothed, and with the independent air of one who knows he is of use, and is appreciated.

Jack,—a little over-prosperous, if anything,—so proud of his new sister, and so often speaking of her among the academy-boys, that they sometimes take him down, after the manner of school-boys, by saying,—

"Don't wear that feather *all* the time, Jack!"

MEW AND PEEP.



BLANCHE and Harlan were up bright and early Christmas morning to see what in the world their presents could be. For they had been told that it was nothing from the toy-shops, nothing to wear, nothing to eat, — nothing, even, that had been made by mamma's busy fingers.

What could it be?

Blanche was first out of her little bed, and saw a basket packed with hay. On a card, tied to the handle, was written, "A Christmas tail for little Blanche, from grandma."

In a second, she spied the "Christmas tail" trying to unpack itself through the meshes of the basket. She quickly pulled out the hay, cuddled the soft, little present in her arms, and named it "Mew," "for that was the very first word she spoke," said Blanche. The first thought always with Blanche was to share her joys with little brother, so basket and kitty were at once taken to his room. Harlan was already sitting



up in bed, and had spied behind a chair — something well covered.

Could it be another kitty? Harlan was not sure he would be as well pleased as his sister with such a Christmas present. He was only four years old, but he had already made up his small mind that cats were pets for girls and old ladies.

“Something noisier for men!” he thought.

He hoped his surprise would be a dog.

No; but taking off the wrapper, a joyful little canary flew about in his bright prison, and wished “Merry Christmas” in bird-language.

The idea of owning a bird had never come into Harlan’s mind, and he did not stop to think whether it was so suitable a present for a little boy as for a grown-up lady. He was delighted to have such a treasure for his very own, and named him “Peep,” on the spot.

It was well that the mamma of these children came in just then, and hung the cage in a safe place, for Mew’s green eyes were turned toward the little singer, with a naughty look in them. Never were Christmas presents enjoyed more than these live, little toys.

Blanche could hardly spare hers from her arms a moment, though Mew, it must be said, was a quick-tempered pet. Blanche always had some excuse to make for her, to account for the scratches which covered the little girl’s hands. Even when Mew

scrambled out of her arms one day, as Blanche was carefully bringing her down-stairs, the cat sprang so rudely, that poor Blanche fell headlong.

"Oh, that naughty Mew!" cried Mrs. Howard. "Did she trip you up, darling?"

"Oh, no, mamma," said little Blanche, as soon as she could get her breath. "She did not trip me *up*, she only tripped me *down*."

Harlan wished he were old enough to take all the care of his bird; but he was sure to remind mamma every morning that Peep must be fed, and it was always a fresh delight to watch the dainty creature bathe, or take his tiny breakfasts.

Mew liked the birdie, too; but, oh! how differently she watched him. Never a chance was given her, as there was sometimes given to Harlan, to smooth Peep's soft feathers when mamma cautiously opened the cage-door to put in a fresh bath.

But Mew had wicked plans of her own. She knew that she could not get that cage-door open; but she was just bad enough to hate the sweet little singer.

One morning, when the family were at breakfast, into the sitting-room stole the naughty kitty, jumped upon the music-stool, then upon the piano; and then, with her horrid claws all spread out like a dreadful fan, she flew at the cage. She could only set it to swinging wildly, but this she did again and again, till poor Peep's heart went as wildly as the cage, then all

at once stopped beating, and all the joy and music was forever gone from a bunch of pretty yellow feathers.

Harlan was given the sad privilege of taking the dead bird in his own tender hands; and Blanche, who felt nearly as broken-hearted as the chief mourner, dug a tiny grave in the snow by the garden-wall.

She had forgiven much in her naughty pet, but she loved her no longer; and when the grocer-boy said that morning that a cat was needed in the store, Mew was given away at once to learn the trade of rat-catching.

Two pairs of tearful, brown eyes had lost all the Christmas sparkle out of them, but a certain kind Uncle John, hearing the fate of the Christmas presents, visited a bird-store; and when the children came down to breakfast New Year's morning, they saw, hanging in the sunny windows, two pretty cages, each holding a pair of lovely Java sparrows.

Though the children could not forget poor little Peep and naughty Mew, they were comforted with these new pets, and have never yet had a heart-ache over the little sparrows.



A HAPPY FAMILY.



T would seem an easy thing to make a "happy family" of cats and squirrels. Indeed, they have so many looks and ways in common, that they may well be first-cousins.

The squirrel, however, is a sort of angel kitty,—a kitty that does not scratch, nor have fits, nor steal the cream, nor show any of the total depravity of kittenhood; a sort of glorified kitty that is lifted above the earth.

I do not refer to the flying-squirrel alone. All squirrels can fly, when occasion requires, according to the authority of the latest naturalists. The common red squirrel can make of himself an air-ship, using his tail as a sail, and with swift little motions of his paws, can navigate the air for a distance of sixty feet at a time.

Such aerial journeys, I venture to say, are not very often made.

People differ in their views of cats. In some homes, kitty is an outlaw, consigned to the cellar or the wood-



A HAPPY FAMILY.

shed. In other families, she has the warmest corner, the rarest bits, the brightest neck-ribbons.

What is a cozier sight, on a winter's day, to the passer-by, than a soft pussy cuddled in the sunny window-seat amid a row of bright geraniums?

I have my own opinion of the merits of pussy and geraniums on *the other side of the glass*. The plants and the pussies that take the sunny windows from the children are a doubtful blessing.

But there's no discount on squirrels. Blithe little beings, airiest of the unfeathered tribe! They seem akin to their neighbors in the nests; their eyes, indeed, "have looks like birds, flying straightway to the light."

There's a pleasant wooded hill, not a dozen miles from Boston, where a colony of squirrels once lived. On August mornings, before their harvest-season had begun, they used to have a royal game of "tag," at five o'clock. Go there at nine, and you would not hear a sound but the fretful flute of the mosquito; but in the freshness of dawn, the woods were alive with fun.

Two little girls — Franc and Janie — were permitted to witness the carnival, and as they never abused their privileges by startling the squirrels, they attended these gay matinees till the frost showered down the chestnuts, and set the merry-makers to work.

Little Janie thus learned to prize the freedom of the



woods, and was hardly pleased when, one day, she received a present of a gray squirrel, in a cage.

Her uncle, who had noticed her interest in living things, and her tender care of what belonged to her, was sure she would like the new pet.

But the child's face sobered as she watched the restless little creature turning around and around upon his monotonous wheel.

One morning, Bonny was missing from his prison.

All the family were sorry for Janie, and her brother, Clyde, spent nearly the whole day in the woods searching for the runaway.

In the afternoon, Janie's mother, full of pity for the little girl, joined in the search, Janie going with her. The child's face was troubled, her eyes cast down. She had very little to say. But when the sun was setting, and they came upon poor Clyde, tired and hatless, resting under a tree, little Janie confessed, brokenly, —

"Oh, forgive me! I got up in the night, and let Bonny out myself! I could not bear to have him caged. *Please* forgive me, Clyde!"

Clyde received the apology with as much grace as could be expected of a tired boy, whose hat had been blown into a pond, in a "wild-geese" chase after a squirrel; but he forgave his sister in time, and she has never owned a caged pet since.

RAWTHMALL RANGE.



UMMER fruits and summer flowers were over, but all the woods were starred with Michaelmas daisies when the children gathered at their grandfather's.

It had been voted, in family-conclave, to have a Thanksgiving earlier than that appointed by the governor.

The last of November had been found an uncomfortable season to travel with little ones, so all were to meet around the Thanksgiving-table, this year, in October.

There were more than a dozen cousins in this family-circle, but as only three figure in this story, I will introduce these alone, albeit they are the least attractive of the lot, being at what is called "the awkward age," when there are more angles than curves.

Cora, for instance,—a wide-awake girl of eleven,—was too positive to be agreeable. She had little patience; was rather apt to accuse others of cheating, if she found herself beaten; and, on the whole, was a difficult little person to please.

And Elise,—a sweet-looking little girl,—was much too prim for comfort. She was prone to advise, to rebuke, to exhort, to come upon one in unexpected places, and to report what she saw, or imagined; and, in fact, was particularly disgusting to the third cousin. I will now present to you—

Master Abner Rawthmall, junior.

Now, it is well known that the mere fact of a boy's being named for his grandfather does not entail upon him the virtues of that honored man.

In this case, certainly, Abner Rawthmall, junior, was very little like the first of that name.

He would saucily stand his ground when Cousin Cora accused him of cheating. In spite of promises to the contrary, he would help himself to cookies whenever he was hungry. He would slide down the banisters; he would climb in dangerous places; he despised overcoats and overshoes.

He loved his mother, and, in a general way, he meant to obey her, but he was apt to forget.

Rawthmall Range, as his grandfather's place was called, was a fine old mansion, with aged trees behind it, among which a clearing had been made for croquet and lawn-tennis. A velvet-like green was spread in front of the house, brightly blooming with flowers and foliage-plants.

Beyond and back of the house stretched fields and orchards, and on the extreme border was a



pleasant farm-house where the hired men were boarded.

This new-fashioned Thanksgiving was to be a holiday all over Rawthmall Range. The hired men could have a day off. The farmer and his wife were invited to dine at "the great house," as Mr. Rawthmall's mansion was called.

All were pleased, — all but one, — Peter Bushel, the wood-chopper. He did not board at the farm-house, having a little home of his own in the village below.

Peter was a Canadian. He had a sad-eyed wife, and a timid little boy, named Adolph. The child had a frightened air, and it was supposed that the father's drinking habits had scared the small Adolph, at times, almost out of his slender wits.

Grandfather Rawthmall wished to make Thanksgiving-Day a happy one at the Bushels' poor home, so he handed Peter a basket the night before, heaped with all the luxuries for a nice dinner, and had said to him, "I hope you will enjoy your dinner, Peter, and I don't forget that I owe you a week's wages. You shall have it to-morrow."

Grandfather thought that by furnishing the dinner, and not paying Peter on the eve of a holiday, that the Bushels would be more likely to have a sober husband and father at the head of the table.

Peter was disappointed and vexed. He had not

meant to take his dinner at home, and it was anything but "a calm view of temperance" that he took, as he tramped angrily down the village street.

The next morning, he proposed to Adolph that they should take a walk. "Shall be home to dinner at two, sharp," he said to his wife. "Mind you have it ready."

Mrs. Bushel, for answer, only screwed her lips the tighter, having learned the useful lesson that silence is better than speech, sometimes.

Little Adolph set forth, wondering where his father was to take him. As they neared the Rawthmall woods, Mr. Bushel said, "Now, I've got a bit of raking to do, holiday or no holiday. I want you to gather heaps of those dry clematis-blossoms, and carry them down in the barn-cellar of the farm-house. Mind you get heaps of them, and see what kind of wood 'the Old Square' will get from them."

Adolph hastened to do as he was bid. It was well he did not turn to look at his father. The expression of revenge in Peter's bad face was enough to frighten one.

The little boy worked faithfully till his father gave him leave to go up in the barn-loft and rest awhile; then they might start for home. The tired child sat down, and leaned against the timbers, enjoying the sweet breath of the hay, and thinking longingly of the nice dinner he was soon to enjoy.

But what was this? Hay-seed,—dust? The air was getting choky. After all, barns were not so nice as out-doors. He started for the ladder, but the dust was thicker,—oh, it was smoke! and right after the smoke, the flames! Poor little Adolph!

That morning, when Peter and his son started on their walk, a game of lawn-tennis was going on among the children at Rawthmall Range, with the usual results. Elise was shocked at the rude manners of her cousins, and had taken herself off. Cora had dashed ahead, after her heedless style, and had been beaten by Abner.

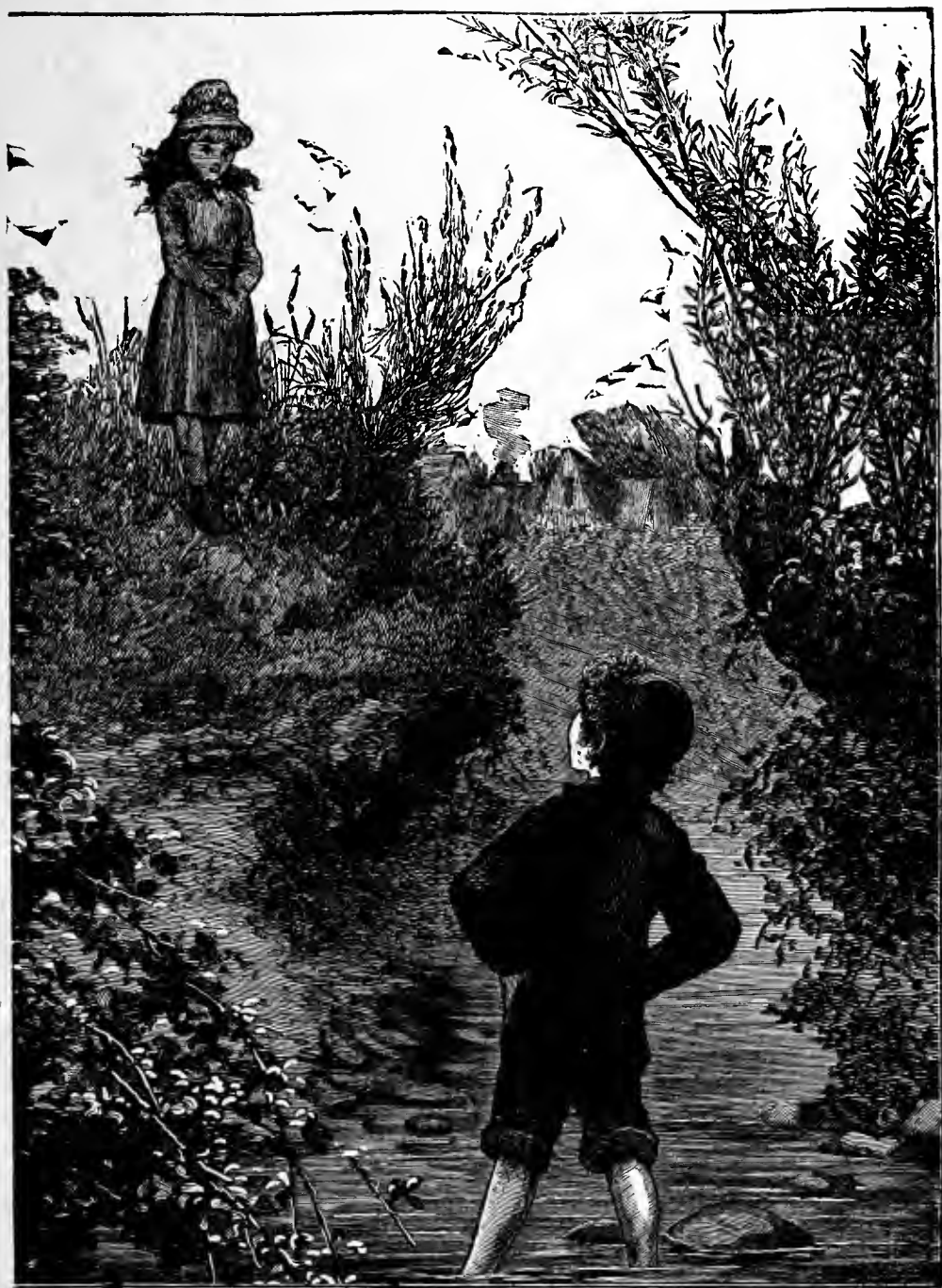
He was naturally indignant with her charges of cheating, and not caring to play longer with a girl who was so unreasonable, he had wandered away to the brook that flowed through the wood. His boots and stockings were soon off, and he was happy as a boy can be as he waded about in the cool water.

Suddenly, a familiar voice startled him. Looking up to the bank, he spied his small “accusing angel,”—Cousin Elise.

“Come out of the water this minute!” she piped; “you’ll get your feet wet!”

“Get my feet wet? Course I will. That’s what I put ’em in here for. Water, you see, is most always wet, and it has a curious way of wetting whatever is put into it. Queer, isn’t it?”

Elise did not reply, but it was plain that she felt it



to be her duty to report at headquarters at once, and away she ran as fast as her small feet could go.

Abner considered that he might be received with better favor, if he were to present himself in dry clothing. He thought that, by this hour, the farmer and his wife must have gone down to his grandfather's, and that the farm-house must be deserted. The sunny kitchen-porch there, where the milk-pans stood in glittering rows to sun, would be a prime place to sit while his clothes should dry.

As he was hurrying past the barn, he saw a faint smoke puffing through the cracks, and heard a cry for help.

Quick as a flash, Abner remembered the big dinner-horn, which hung just outside the kitchen-porch. He knew that would be the best fire-alarm possible, and it was not many minutes before men from the great house, and from neighboring farms, had come to the rescue.

But brave Abner did not wait for others to answer that frightened call for help. He forced his way through the blinding smoke, and dragged out, more dead than alive, poor little Adolph.

The barn was burned to the ground, but the fire was prevented from spreading further.

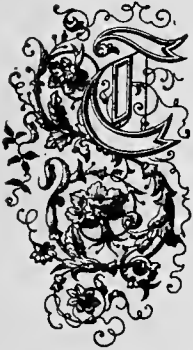
What became of Peter Bushel is not certain. It is supposed that he fled to Canada, or, as one of the hired men expressed it, "he went back to live with the Canucks."

WANTED.

After the exciting events of the fire, the Thanksgiving-dinner was very acceptable, and Abner, junior, was declared, even by petulant Cora and precise Elise, to be the hero of *Rawthmall Range*.

WANTED.

"WANTED. — A young lady, bereft of her little sisters and brothers, and dependent upon herself, would gladly assume the care of a family of children at the beach from June to September. Her board the only wages expected. Best references. I. R., Box 620."



HIS rather unusual "want" was noticed by Mr. Dean, as he was taking the daily paper with his coffee, one May morning. Everything in the dining-room had that unmistakable air that shows the absence of the lady of the house. The window-shades had been jerked up unevenly; the children had finished their breakfasts, but bills of fare were printed in maple-syrup, milk, and oatmeal all over their frocks.

A cross-faced girl was leaning out of the kitchen-window, calling, in no gentle voice, to the ice-man. A crosser-faced nurse was going up-stairs with a bowl of gruel.

WANTED.

The small infant, who was responsible for all this discomfort, was crying loudly in the chamber above. Somehow, at this moment, the advertisement Mr. Dean was reading seemed cheering.

"I declare!" he exclaimed, "I'll go right up and read that to Annie. Wish that Gorgon" (as he unkindly termed the nurse) "was not forever in the room."

Mrs. Dean was apt to view life from the same hopeful point that her husband did.

Anchored, as she was, by this two-weeks' old daughter, the usual summer-vacation at the beach had not been thought of; but why could not her children be safe and happy there under the care of this mysterious "I. R."?

The advertisement was answered, references exchanged, and one morning, a week later, "I. R." presented herself.

She was a slight, elegant young lady. Her dress, her manners, her conversation, showed that she was no common person. Mrs. Dean and "I. R." were mutually pleased, and felt that each had need of the other.

Miss "I. R." introduced herself as Isadore Royalstone. Her mother had died two years before, and she had devoted herself to the three darling children.

All had been stricken in one short week with diphtheria, and three little graves in Mount Auburn told

the sad result. The terrible bereavement was too great for Mr. Royalstone. Already harassed with business-perplexities, this sudden horror prostrated him with brain-fever, and soon Isadore was left alone. Misfortunes never come singly, and she was soon aware that she could not dress herself in expensive mourning, and sit down in idle grief.

The settling up of her father's estate left nothing for Isadore to depend on but — herself.

She had secured a place to teach in the public schools, in September; but now it was May, and a long summer was before her. She loved children, and preferred to take charge of little ones that had been under their mother's care, rather than brought up — or brought down — by nursery-girls.

It was all happily arranged. The first day of summer found Miss Royalstone and the little Deans on board a steamer, with city-walls behind them, and the sea-air freshly blowing in their young faces.

The Dean children could not be compared in good looks with Isadore's lost darlings. Rose and Lillie Dean — the eldest — were twins, with large eyes, and large mouths, as well; their hair, however, was like golden waterfalls, and their complexions worthy their flowery names — if they stayed in-doors; but a good breeze would paint Rose as red as any rose in the garden, and freckle her sister till she looked more like a tiger-lily than a lily of the valley.

WANTED.

Pamela was the next, — a fearfully plain child, with the name and the old face of her grandmother.

Fritz was a heedless boy, of eight, and Carl, a lovable child, of four.

On the whole, they were a group of average children, neither better nor worse than others.

Miss Royalstone set about her summer's work with the zeal of a young missionary, and when she reached their boarding-place, she thanked the good Father that He had guided her to such a home.

Mrs. Rachel French was by no means the average seaside-landlady. She had long been a friend of the Deans, and welcomed the whole party as kindly as if they were her own.

It was late bedtime when they arrived, so they went at once to their rooms. The front, square chamber held a big bed for Miss Royalstone and Pamela, while Carl's little crib stood beside it. The twins' room opened right out of this chamber, and a side-door led into the little room where Fritz was to sleep. All these chambers were as fresh and sweet as three white daisies, and Miss Royalstone was glad to have the little ones right under her wing, as it were. When they were asleep, she sat long in the starlight, looking out upon the water, and hearing its soothing murmur as the soft waves retreated farther and farther from the beach.

But, at midnight, the scene changed. There was an

WANTED.

uneasy stir in the little crib, then a cry of pain. "What is it, darling?" said Isadore, as she drew little Carl to her. "Are you afraid, pet? I am right here beside you."

"Not afraid," said the little fellow, manfully; "but, oh! I've got *lightning* in my ear! Oh, I shall be kazy!"

It was sea-cold in the room; the whitewashed walls that had seemed so attractive a few hours before, now looked ghastly. "How foolish," thought she, "was I to undertake the the care of all these children."

But Isadore was too stout-hearted to give up to such thoughts.

In a few moments the lamp was softly burning, the blanket from her own bed snugly tucked about the little sufferer, warmed wool in the ears where the "lightning" darted,—homœopathic sugar-plums, labeled "*Aconitum*," within the little willing lips. In half an hour, all was quiet, and the tired girl fell asleep, having conquered the first trial in her new duties.

But, though first, it was by no means the last. The next morning, Fritz made a flying-leap out of bed, and landed on a tack, point upward, of course. Still, he did *not* have the lockjaw.

Pamela would sometimes help herself from Auntie French's pantry, without leave. Rose and Lillie were apt to tell large stories. Fritz was often reckless.

WANTED.

Carl would let the chickens into the garden, — still the days went by happily.

Miss Royalstone shared all their delight in gathering flowers, collecting shells, and stones, and butterflies. It was a daily excitement to visit the post-office of the village, — an odd little grocery, — where the letters seemed to be stowed away, as it happened, among sugar, spice, or codfish.

Sometimes, good Auntie French would pack their picnic-baskets, and they would go off for a long day in the woods, or on the beach.

At last, the nodding golden-rod by the roadside warned them that August was almost over, and they must soon return to the city.

Miss Royalstone had learned to love her little charge. She wondered how she ever could have thought that the twins were plain, and dear little Pamela disagreeable. As for the boys, she was proud of daring Fritz, and loved darling Carl next to her own little brothers.

It was their last day at the beach, and after many promises not to go beyond safe limits, Miss Royalstone had consented to take the little ones to a bluff overlooking the lovely water.

They had picnicked under the trees, and then sat down among the daisies to hear one of Miss Royalstone's fairy-stories, which always charmed the children.



WANTED.

Something she was saying about the fairies ringing the wild hare-bells to summon the "little people in green" to a midnight dance, reminded Fritz that he had once noticed sprays of these dainty bells drooping from beneath this very same high bluff. Forgetful alike of danger, and of his promise "to keep within safe limits," he suddenly dashed away, and bent over the cliff to see if he could grasp a handful of the flowers. He was rushing with such speed that he could not stop, and away,—out of sight,—little Fritz was gone!

One awful moment Miss Royalstone sat horror-struck. Then she spoke: "Sit still every one of you!" she said with such authority that not a child of them stirred. She did not waste a moment by looking over the bluff, but running with swift feet to the beach, she pushed off in a little boat, and soon had gained the water below into which Fritz had dropped, in his awful fall of fifty feet. Nothing was at first seen, but directly he rose to the surface, not a drowned boy, either, but striking out lustily, showing that his summer lessons in swimming were of use to him now.

Miss Royalstone aided him in getting aboard, and then, thinking they had had picnic enough for one day, she returned to the other children, still obediently waiting among the daisies, and took them all to Auntie French's cottage.



BETSEY O'DEE.

As this adventure ended safely, the children were not sorry to have it to add to their stock of stories "to tell papa and mamma," though Fritz always recalled it with a troubled conscience.

The next day saw them safe home; for "home," ever after, was the pleasant fireside of the Deans to Isadore, even when, years after, she had given up teaching for a home of her own.

BETSEY O'DEE.



HE sat in the most comfortable chair in the Albys' sitting-room. Having invited herself to tea, she "hoped she had good manners enough to know which chair belonged to the guest."

She was knitting genteelly, with mits upon her knuckly fingers, giving advice to the children, and making herself generally disagreeable. In fact, the young people of the village did not love her overmuch, but the mothers who had lived long enough to prize the sweetness of home, pitied beyond measure the lonely old lady, who had not a relative on earth, to her knowledge.

She lived, when she did not "go out to tea," in a little cottage in the village of Sleepywater.

Here she had an A, B, C-school.

Those naughty little boys and giggling girls! If I could summon them to-night from their scattered homes, I don't doubt they could all say that they well remembered how that little school closed at night. There was a circle of children, and Miss O'Dee in the centre. There she stood, with her birch-switch in her hand, her glasses pushed well up towards the falsest of wigs, her eyes wide open, while she repeated, in concert with the scholars, the Lord's Prayer, interspersing the sacred words with such ejaculations as, "Codman, what are you doing? Walter, less attention! More silence, all of you!" She could be honey-sweet; but the children always suspected a sting not far off; and even the mothers found that when Miss O'Dee was extra amiable, it was because she wanted some favor. Very slow was she to take a hint, and very, very indignant when more than a hint was given.

Her invitations out were sometimes impossible to decline. "I am coming up to see you some day before long, Mrs. Alby," she had remarked insinuatingly, the day "before this story begins."

"So—do,"—replied Mrs. Alby, hesitating between sincerity and hospitality. "Or wait, perhaps a couple of weeks, till we are through with house-cleaning, and

the trees are leaved out, when it will be beautiful on our farm."

"Trees!" cried the old lady, scornfully. "Do you suppose I am going to live in a *tree*? You know very well, Mrs. Alby, that though I was intimate with the first families in my youth, I am willing to take you *just as you are*, and will not keep you waiting two weeks. I will come up this very night; and if the Bisbees don't come for me, — they've been wanting to see me all winter, — I'll spend the night at your house, — perhaps two, — I can't promise."

Why didn't Mrs. Alby stop Miss O'Dee's impudence?

Why didn't anybody! Was it a halo of past glory about Miss O'Dee that the Sleepywater people respected, or was it from pure pity that they tolerated her? The Alby farm was, indeed, a good place to visit. There was welcome smiling all over it. A charming place by day, and almost as charming when night gathered the large family about the hearth-stone, or the door-stone, according to the season.

But ever with Miss O'Dee's coming came a spirit of unrest and discontent; and, this evening, the children besought their mother to let them make molasses-candy in the kitchen, that they might escape the unwelcome guest.

Miss O'Dee, poor soul! did not like to be left alone; and as little Miriam was darting by her she was delayed.

"It isn't perlitè, darling, to go in front of anybody. I never did when I was young. And now that your mother has gone up-stairs with the baby, you children should not leave company alone. Besides, I have something special to say to you, Miriam. I want you to write my *auto-biography*."

A giggle from the kitchen betrayed listeners.

"Nobody but yourself can do that, you know," remarked saucy Will.

"I shall speak to your mother about you," threatened the old lady.

It was then thought best by the little people in the kitchen to attend to their candy, and keep well away from Miss O'Dee; and a merry time they had of it, fashioning corn-balls, nut-candy, and "twists," which they afterward discussed on the door-steps, by the light of the fire-flies.

All but Miriam. She dared not excuse herself after being told what an honor was expected of her,—to write the story of Miss O'Dee's life. So she dropped meekly into the nearest chair to hear this little tale.

"My mother was Hilary O'Connor, a rich and beautiful young lady. But what must she do but run off and marry John O'Dee, when she was but sixteen.

"If she had only waited and asked *me*, I could have advised her better, though I was but five years old when she died. Well, of course, all we O'Connors were obliged to disown her. My grandfather was a

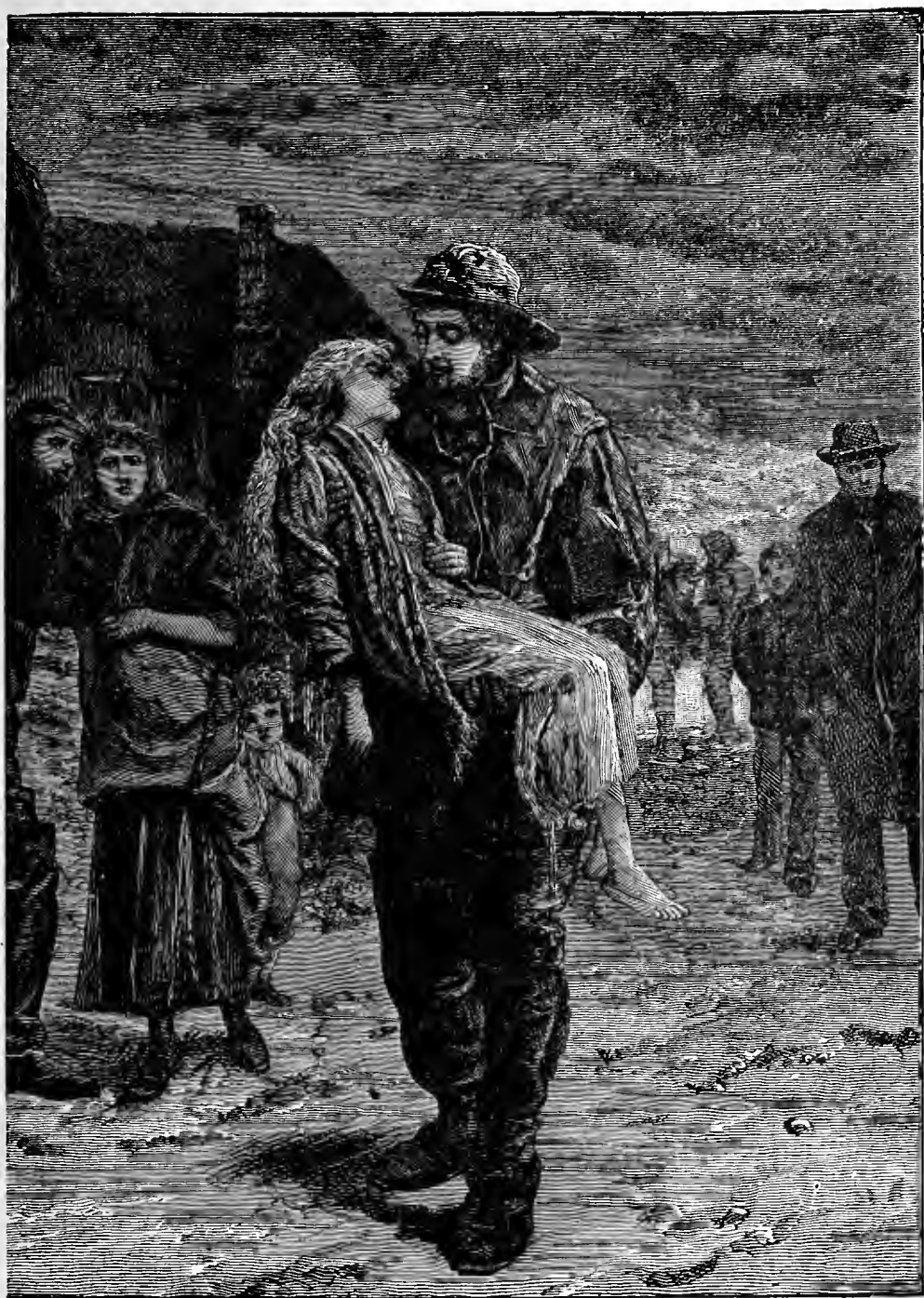
wealthy man, but in consequence of her foolish conduct, his poor Hilary was cut off with a shilling.

"John O'Dee was obliged to leave us in the old country while he went to America to make a home for us. He was not equal to the O'Connors in birth and wealth, but he was an accomplished scholar, and was not loth to let it be known, so that in a few months he had established a select academy in a seaport of Maine, and could send for my mother and myself.

"I have a faint recollection of that sea-journey, but most of it is swallowed up in a horror of wind and water and death. I can remember coming out of it, as out of a dream, and finding myself in a great cradle, lined with a dark-blue quilted stuff, very restful to the eye, for the kitchen wherein it stood was so bright; a roaring, open fire; a shining yellow floor; a dresser with polished copper and pewter dishes, reflecting back the fire like so many moons.

"Soon the door opened, and fishermen brought in my dead mother. And then I heard them say, standing on the shore that stormy night, my father had seen the ship go down, and had drowned himself from grief.

"I thought then, and I think now, Miriam, that it was a selfish thing for him to do, and father though he was, it would have been well for me if I had never seen an O'Dee, but had stayed always with the O'Connors.



"My grandfather repented, I was told, and made over to me the money that would have been my mother's. A friend of my father's, residing in the town where I then lived, was appointed my guardian, and I was to live at his house. There, for years, I had everything to make me what you see me now. I was too rich to care to study or to work, and too handsome to care to be unselfish. Not the kind of handsome that you see here in Maine, child; but I had soft, purple eyes, and complexion exactly like your mother's wax-plant.

"I had more admirers than any young lady in the State, I venture to say; but the greatest admirer of Betsey O'Dee was Betsey O'Dee herself.

"Sometimes, it is true, I would have sad, yearning thoughts of my mother, and then I would ask Sydney Gould, my guardian's son,—a kind-hearted boy,—to visit the old grave-yard with me, and I would plait a wreath, and Sydney would kneel in the long grass and lay it reverently on her grave, while the old sexton would tell us the story that we knew so well; how the 'Green Erin' was wrecked off Owl's Head, and how I was lashed to a board and floated ashore; how mother was rescued just as she drew her last, frightened breath, and how my father's body was never found.

"But I seldom cared to think of these sad things; it was more agreeable to be gay.

"When I was a young lady of eighteen, my guar-



dian suddenly died. An examination of his affairs showed that he had been investing my money unwisely. In fact, there was nothing remaining of my fortune.

"My grandfather was dead, and his property had changed hands, so that it was beyond my reach.

"What was I to do? I very soon found out that many I had called 'friends' cared for my money, not for me.

"Miriam! remember this: If you worship self, no matter how handsome and how rich you may be (though you're not likely to be handsome, nor rich, either, for that matter!) but if you ever should see a young beauty circumstanced as I was, tell her to learn to be useful, and not admire herself beyond measure, or there may sometime be another wretched Betsey O'Dee in the world.

"It is too late now," sighed the old lady, gazing upward with the faded eyes she fondly imagined were once "a soft purple."

"If my parents had lived, it all would have been so different! God be merciful to the young things that are left without their best earthly friends, and when their father and mother forsake them, may He take them up!"

"He has promised that," ventured little Miriam, timidly.

"I know that," responded the old lady, tartly, her momentary softness gone; "don't quote Scriptur' to *me*."

A BUNCH OF MIGNONETTE.



F one must have the scarlet fever, this is a pretty pleasant place to get well in."

So thought pale little Maria Lenoir, leaning against her Aunt Penelope in the old-fashioned garden.

It was a dear old place; the garden, not at all like gardens nowadays, with their well-trimmed foliage plants contrasted with bright blossoms. There were thickets of roses, from the "fretful sweet-brier" that wounded you one minute, and the next minute begged pardon with sweet breath, to the solid red roses, layer upon layer of color and perfume. There were ranks of hollyhocks, in uniform of yellow, of pink, of purple. There were great, violet Canterbury-bells in their leafy towers. There were prim maiden-pinks, and double-pinks, that had outgrown each calyx, and scattered fragrant flakes on the garden-walks. There were overrunning clumps of ribbon-grass, sweet southernwood-bushes, and poppies nodding in their gay nightcaps. Maria had walked among them all that June afternoon, and chosen a hand-

ful of mignonette. This was Aunt Penelope's favorite, too.

At last, quite tired,—for little Maria was not yet strong,—she sought the foot of the garden, where, under the shade of some large trees, Aunt Penelope's garden-chair stood. The little girl thought her pretty auntie looked as if she might have grown in a garden, too,—a tall, white lily, or a blush-rose.

"You look tired, darling," said Miss Penelope, as she drew the pale child toward her; "let me take you in my arms."

"Just let me lean against your chair," said Maria; "it is too warm for you to hold me, and would you tell me a little story, please?"

Aunt Penelope smiled. She did not like to tell stories, but who could refuse such a gentle little pleader?

"I don't know anything you have not heard," began Miss Penelope, "so I will tell you an old one.

"When your dear mamma died, away off in France, where she went for health, you and your baby twin-sister were here at grandma's, each with a nurse, and grandma to oversee them. But poor grandma died suddenly in an attack of paralysis, and the nurses had it all their own way for a while.

"These nurses, however, were very kind. Nurse Smith had charge of the less likely infant"—and Miss Penelope drew Maria closer, while she looked a

bit roguish, — "Nurse Smith's baby was pale and fretful, and not likely to live, everybody said, but she *did* live, bless her!

"Nurse Brown took care of the little Sophia, who was a rosy, active, little thing, with dark eyes, like her papa's.

"But it is not the healthiest-looking children that are the surest to live. Long before we returned, the sad news came that baby Sophia had died of malignant scarlet fever. When she was first taken ill, Nurse Brown went with her to her own home, lest you should catch the dreadful disease. The poor baby lived but a few days. Good Mrs. Brown mourned as if she had lost her own child. She could not bear to live in the village where she would be reminded of her lost pet, and before we returned, she had moved away to a distant town, and all there is to remind us of your baby-sister is the carved name on the marble in the old cemetery."

"Tell me some more, please. Were little Sophia and I old enough to play any together, and to love each other?" asked the lonely child.

The answer was interrupted by a voice outside the garden-fence, — "Please give me a flower, lady?"

Maria did not wait for Aunt Penelope to answer. "Oh, the flowers are away up at the other end of the garden. Come to-morrow and you can have some."

"But," persisted the little beggar, "I don't care for

flowers as has color; I likes flowers as has the sweet breath,"—and she looked longingly at Maria's handful of mignonette.

The little girl's heart was touched. "Why, that's the kind of flower *I* like best!" she exclaimed. "Take them all."

"Mother will be so pleased," said the little beggar; and she took the sweet bunch, and went away happy.

But this was not the last time that the bright little face peeped through the fence, and went away brighter for a gift of flowers.

One day, instead of coming, as usual, to the foot of the garden, the ragged child walked boldly in at the front entrance, and rang the door-bell. She was by no means a timid beggar.

"She asked for you, Miss Penelope," said the indignant housemaid, "as if she were the biggest lady in the land, and there was no putting her off."

Miss Penelope had become quite interested in the little flower-lover, in spite of her bad manners; so she laughingly ran to the door with a bunch of damask-roses she had just gathered. "There, little one," said she, "take these and run, for I am very, very busy this morning."

"I don't want flowers this time," said the child, suddenly. "My mother is awful sick, and says she must see you."

"A pretty scrape Miss Penelope has got herself



into," sighed Jane, the housemaid, as she watched the young lady hurrying off with the beggar. "That all comes from encouraging such low folks. Give them an inch and they'll take an ell!" And Jane flourished her duster about so angrily, that all the vases trembled for their lives.

It was a poor little home where the sick woman was lying. Very feeble she seemed, and it was with difficulty that she could speak.

"You don't remember me?" she asked Miss Penelope. "I am the nurse, Brown, that you all trusted. I did not mean to do wrong, but I had come to love your poor sister's baby as if it were my own; and when I heard that its own mother was in consumption, I thought it would get more love with me, mayhap, for its little twin favored the mother more, and I fancied, — I was that jealous for my little nursling, — that baby Maria was noticed more. Then, when my darling took the fever, and was sent off lest the other baby should take it, I got so hard and fierce, I vowed I would keep it altogether. So far as I could find out, there was no great mourning at the news I sent back of her death. All were taken up with the loss of the mother and the grandmother, which soon came upon them, though, indeed, I did hear that little baby Maria had a grieved, knowing look, as if she missed something."

Miss Penelope did not quite believe this strange

story, although the little beggar had, indeed, the dark eyes of the almost-forgotten little Sophia.

"But the ill-luck I deserved came upon me," said Mrs. Brown. "Hardly had I moved out of the State, when I was sick, and all my earnings soon went. At last, I begged my way back here, and coaxed the child to hang around the old house, hoping something might come of it, though never, till now, did she know she was aught but Sallie Brown. Look at this bundle, miss, and you will have proof to satisfy you of my story. These I begged of the baby's papa before he went away."

There was a lace christening-dress, the mate to the one that was daintily folded in lavender in Miss Penelope's own dressing case; there were coral sleeve-clasps, and a silver mug, with the inscription, "Sophia Blanchard Lenoir, May 17, 1847."

"As if I needed any other proof than these brown eyes," thought Miss Penelope. "Why didn't I know my poor little niece when she begged for mignonette? I might have recognized that family trait!"

It was not wholly easy to forgive Mrs. Brown, even though it was her love for Sophia that had led her to deceive so wickedly. She was most kindly cared for through her sickness, and died with an assurance of forgiveness.

It was long before little Sophia was rid of all the ill-effects of her wretched life as a beggar. But no

UNCLE FRED'S SWORD.

happier twins ever lived than the little Lenoirs. There was a pretty contrast between Maria's fair face and gentle ways, and the brilliant beauty and dashing air of the dark-eyed Sophia:

"I'll never forget," Jane would often say, "how independent-like she marched up to the front door, that first time. Might have known she was a Lenoir!" But whether one sister was more like a Blanchard, or like a Lenoir, both were equally loved by their dear father and their Aunt Penelope, who, in due time, became their beloved stepmother.

UNCLE FRED'S SWORD.



H, can I play soldier with this?" shouted Ken.

Auntie Beth waited a moment at the foot of the hall stairs. She had a mind to say "yes," without stopping to see what "this" was, for she heard the jingling of the horse-car she wanted to take. But she felt it wisest "to see what Kenard was up to *now*."

Down the stairs he ran, with a real sword dangling after him.



Auntie Beth's sweet face sobered, and a far-away look came into her blue eyes. She did not notice that the horse-car jingled nearer, stopped with a jerk at the corner of the street, started with another jerk, and then jingled fainter, fainter out of her reach.

"That was Uncle Fred's sword, dear. It is too sacred to play with. Come up-stairs and help me hang it up, and I will tell you about it." The prospect of helping the auntie he admired, and of hearing a story, satisfied Ken, and he led the way to the pleasant library where he had found the sword. Of all the rooms in grandpapa's home this seemed to him the best, the walls were so gay with all sorts of things,—spoils from fields, woods, and beaches, holiday-cards, horse-shoes in silver, in holly, in moss. Over the door the sword belonged.

When it was in its place, Auntie Beth opened her desk and took out a package of old letters.

"Years ago, when I was a child, and Fred a big boy in Phillips Academy, I was visiting in a college town in Maine. I remember, one morning, when people were laughing over what was supposed to be a stupid joke of the college students. Posters were seen in conspicuous places, that President Lincoln had called for seventy-five thousand troops. It was soon found to be no joke, but a dreadful reality.

"Fred was wild to enlist, and indignant that he yet lacked two years of being eighteen. But, alas! the

war dragged on for twice two years. One August vacation, when Fred was home, I remember hearing my older sister say, 'Can't we persuade Fred to go to a lyceum-lecture this evening? There is to be one, out of course, by some distinguished body from New York, and an historical lecture, too. Wouldn't it be refreshing to hear of something, for one evening, but 'the state of the country!'"

"Fred was agreeable, he said; so to the lecture they went. But they did not get rid of the state of the country. Stepping forward at once, without an introduction, the New York gentleman began:—

"'The drums beat in our streets, and the beating hearts of men and women tell me what to say. I do not choose my subject,—it is given to me.'

"'Good!' exclaimed Ken. 'Those big sisters of yours ought not to have got rid of the state of the country. But what makes you remember so well, auntie?'

"'Because my big sisters wrote all about it in their diaries,'" laughed Miss Beth. "You know, Ken, I was a child then, not old enough to understand much about war.

"But I remember that Fred came home more excited than ever. The next day was his birthday. He had a long talk in father's room that morning, with closed doors, and none of us sisters, big or little, was the wiser for it.

"In the evening, he came in looking somehow a good deal taller than usual and I was sure his eyes were blacker. He had a stiff paper in his hand which he gave to Hattie with a military salute.

"'Oh, Fred!' she cried, 'you haven't enlisted!'

"'Yes, ma'am. Couldn't look my grand-children in the face if I didn't!' and the gay boy dashed out of the room. Full of courage as he was, I think he was afraid of Hattie's tears.

"In a few weeks, he and many other young men from our neighborhood marched away with their regiment for Virginia. There were music and cheering and speeches to send them off, but these were very poor comfort to the lonely homes in Oldtown, and it was not long before the 'boys in blue' may have thought so too.

"Glory, in a general way, was very well, and so was military discipline. But when the superior officers were only men that a week before you had called 'Joe' or 'Bill,' who had mended your tin-ware or dug your well, it was odd, to say the least, to pay them deference. And when they put on airs, the poor boy-privates and the young petty officers did not feel half so patriotic as they did in the village war meetings, with the brave speeches and the stirring music in their ears.

"There was for this regiment, at first, a tedious waiting, and Fred's letters from camp had many such incidents as this."

Miss Beth drew a paper from the package and read as follows :

“ ‘I must tell you of a row we had in camp yesterday ; the facts were these : During guard-mounting, a young man in Company F, being full of fun, reached out his hand to one of the guard as if to take his gun for inspection. Lieutenant —— saw it and said, “No more fooling there.” The young man stopped at once, but this new-fledged lieutenant must go and report him to Captain ——, who made the young man put on a loaded knapsack, and hung a board on his neck with the words “IN DISGRACE,” and compelled him to march to and fro in front of the officers’ tent all day, although the sun was hot enough to boil eggs almost.

“ ‘Now, this young man was distinguished in his company for his politeness, kindness and willingness to do his duty at all times. Many times during the day, the boys would manage to get near him and tell him their opinion of the officer, and at night, when he was relieved, a crowd from B and F placed him on a litter and gave him three rousing cheers. Captain —— came out and made a speech. Says he, “You have done things to-day worthy Fort Totten.”

“ ‘Then came Captain ——, who spoke to his company: “You have done things to-day that I should be justified in shooting you for,”—passion stopped him.

“ ‘I wish you could have seen the men from both companies ; fire almost flashed from their eyes.

" 'This is not the first time we have been insulted. Noble men have had this flung in their faces from both the above captains: "You are nothing but privates." I am thankful for the brief authority of an orderly sergeant, but that doesn't amount to much. Our captain is the most overbearing man I ever saw. I will say no more about this at present, but if you are on Boston Common next June when the regiment is mustered out, you will see some tall times.'

"Ah, 'the tall times!' There was much to happen first;—forced marches, hard fighting, wounds and fever. Many a weary soldier in hospital, as he tossed on his cot, thought it would have been easier to have 'flashed his soul out with his gun.'

"So thought poor Fred, struggling slowly back to health from a fierce battle with typhoid fever. June had come; in two weeks the boys would be mustered out on Boston Common; the nine months were almost over. How pitifully hard the poor boy tried to get well, and the surgeon had told him that, in all probability, he could go home with the rest of the boys.

"But Captain —— had other plans. He knew that there was a long score of injustice and meanness against his name, and that Orderly-Sergeant Fred Dearborn was a leader in the company. He, too, had his vision of the mustering-out on Boston Common, and feared an expression of the boys' feeling.

"Yes, it would be safer for him if Sergeant Fred

were in a Virginia hospital that day instead of marching with flying colors on the old Common. It was not hard to drop a word in the surgeon's ear.

"Fred could not get his discharge. The bitter disappointment was more than he could bear.

"One day, a joyful note from him:— 'Coming with the boys next week. Be on hand, all you dear home folks!' The next day a telegram from the surgeon:— 'Relapsé. Orderly-Sergeant Frederic Dearborn died at midnight.'

"A week after the boys were mustered out. They gathered again and marched over the pleasant summer road to the cemetery where the Soldiers' Monument stands. You've seen it, Ken?"

"Yes," said the boy, "and I'm proud of a soldier uncle."

"Ah, you boys are all alike," sighed Auntie Beth as she locked the precious old letters in her desk.



THE WOLF.



WOLF is a dog with the faithfulness, affection, and sociability left out. A wolf is never affectionate unless he loves you so much that he wants to eat you up. And a wolf is never sociable, even with other wolves, unless he joins them for an attack on prey.

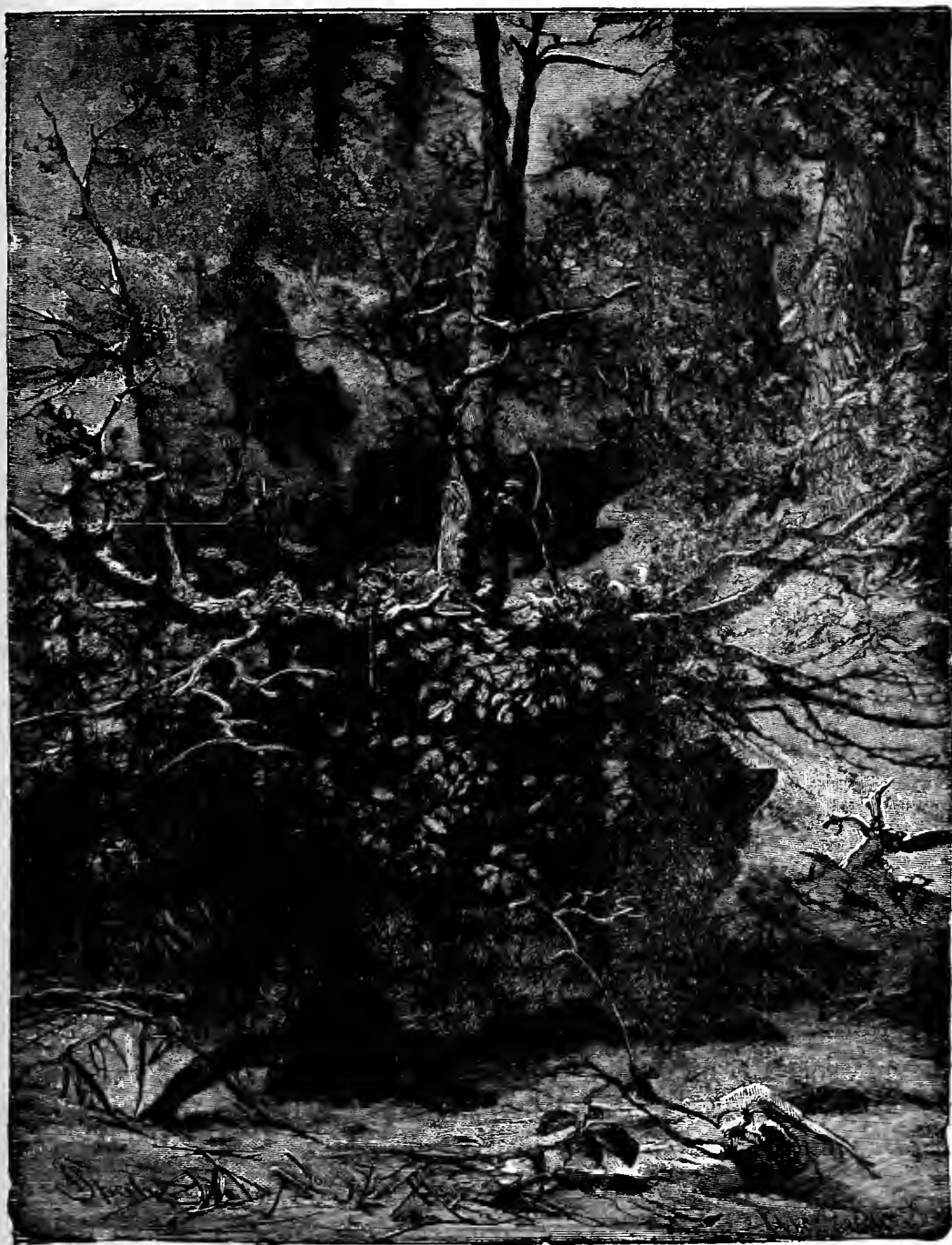
The attack over, he goes sullenly off by himself again, shunning even his own wife and children.

Up to the fifteenth century, these unpopular beasts were the terror of England, as they now are of many European countries.

"King Edgar commuted the sentence of criminals on condition of their procuring a certain number of wolves' tongues."

On the principle that "it takes a rogue to catch a rogue," this plan worked well and England was at last rid of the pest.

Scotland was troubled with them for a longer time, but the last one is said to have been killed in 1680 by Sir Ewen Cameron.



In Ireland the wolf did not go out of fashion till at least 1710.

Our own country has expelled the animal from long-settled places, but a few still remain in the northern woods and mountains of New England.

Packs of wolves tag meanly after the buffaloes on the Western prairies. They dare not attack them, but occasionally are rewarded by finding some dead or dying buffalo who had fallen behind his companions.

They also hunt the deer and frequently run the gentle animal down. The wolves cannot get over the ground so fast as their frightened prey, but they have much greater endurance. The deer seldom uses his weapons — the becoming horns — but, when fairly hunted to death, turns its tearful brown eyes upon its pursuers, with an expression that should melt the heart of a wolf, but it never was known to do so.

Much time has been spent in studying why wolves and similar animals were made. It is easy enough to learn about their anatomy, — to ascertain what they can do and what they cannot do, — but still returns the puzzling question: "What are they for?"

One reason may be that we need such "object lessons" to show us how greed and cruelty and meanness look embodied; and if they are fearful and disgusting when equipped with teeth and claws, they are still more so if running wild in our hearts and breaking out in selfish and hateful acts.

EDEN HILL.



HIS was the name given to a pleasant country home by its summer owners. The place was in the lovely region of the Blue Hills. The people were Miss Charity Bellows and five or six young nephews and nieces, whom she had invited to a happy summer vacation with her.

Miss Bellows was a most agreeable person. Her hair was soft and white, and crimped in little becoming waves around her gentle forehead. Her eyes were bright brown, quick to fill with tears or sparkle with fun, as occasion required. She was large and tall, and well she looked in her rich dresses. She was always thinking of capital plans to make people happy, and this was one of them: to hire a country house, fill it with young people, who else would have had but a dull vacation, and thus make a summer of delight for them.

It was such a fortunate thing that Miss Charity's purse matched her heart.

These young cousins she had invited were from various places. Archer Beverly was a Maine boy, frank and bright, and, to the surprise of his city cousins, as refined and gentlemanly as if he had *not* been brought up in the woods; Junia Martin and Clarence White were Boston bred, while Celia Prescott and her brother Ellery came from New York.

All were nice young people in their different ways: Junia, the only one who gave Aunt Charity much anxiety. She was a lively girl who scorned "the common course of events," and was fond of experimenting. So long as she experimented in cooking only, and the family were not dependent upon her experiments for their bill of fare, it was well enough; but when she performed chemical experiments in the stable and actually "raised the roof" by an explosion, she was a young lady to be feared.

Miss Celia was so very different; a gentle, lady-like, little person. The boys all agreed that Celia was by far the more comfortable companion, but it was plain they admired Junia.

Of course, as Junia and Celia were the only girls of the party, they were much together, and, of course, Celia was often displeased and distressed with her pretty cousin.

All sorts of excursions drew the young folks into the fields and woods, though they were, perhaps, never happier than when they gathered in the twilight with

their lovely old aunt, talking and singing together, or sitting in almost uninterrupted quiet on the wide platform, enjoying the lovely hill views.

One August morning it was voted high time to collect ferns, leaves and grasses.

While the others were busy packing lunch baskets, Junia was missing. The boys knew where she was and what she was doing, but thought it dishonorable to tell. Celia went in search and found her valiant cousin behind the stable, practising with a pistol.

"See," cried Junia, "I can hit that nail-head in the fence every time. Let's play 'William Tell.' Run in the house and get me an apple and I will shoot it off your head!"

"I think you will not!" said Celia, "and I shall tell Aunt Charity of you."

Of course Miss Bellows disapproved of pistols.

"They may be a necessity in some places," said she, "but certainly not in Massachusetts. The young girls we read of in the papers that use pistols, always accidentally discharge them in somebody's face,—their own usually. Give me the pistol, my dear."

"I can't, indeed, auntie!" exclaimed Junia. "I have been studying about where we are going to-day, and I *could* tell you something that would scare you more than pistols."

"Nonsense! I know nothing to fear in this region only the summer tempests;" and she scanned the

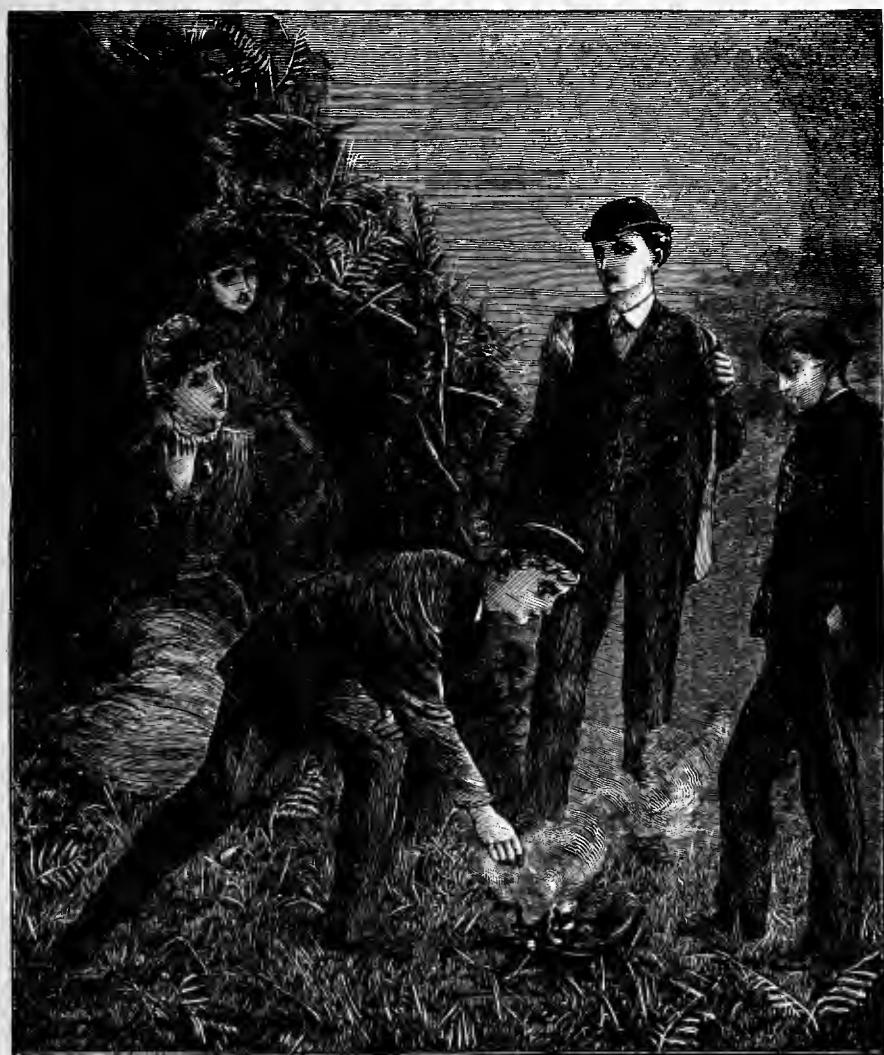
western sky to see if an unwelcome thunder-head were shaking his white beard. "There is not a safer region anywhere; and, with all these young gentlemen to defend you, the idea of a pistol is absurd. I trust to your honor, Junia, to leave it at home."

"I feel wicked to have that blessed saint 'trust my honor,' confessed naughty June, as she walked ahead with Archer, "but she would forgive me if she knew all that I know."

"Tell me, I won't tell," pleaded Archer. "What can it be that's so fearful? You can't shoot a thunder-storm, now, can you? and aunt says that is the only danger."

"I'll tell *you*, Archie," (and, in ten minutes she had told Master Ellery and Clarence too, as a special favor,) "but you mustn't let poor Celia know. I've been reading all about this place, and the rocky hills we are to visit to-day are full of rattlesnakes, — brim full! Isn't it funny, Archer; there are over one thousand kinds of snakes in the world, and not an honorable kind among them but our own American! I'm proud of him. All other known snakes are your sneaking, treacherous kind, but our rattlesnake, — how different! To begin with, he never attacks unless he is insulted or pursued, and then he's so honorable: sounds his rattle to let you know his intentions, and then sits up, throws back his head, and — so forth!"

"And just then," said Archer, highly interested, "is



when you think a pistol would come in handy? I agree with you. Let me have it, June!"

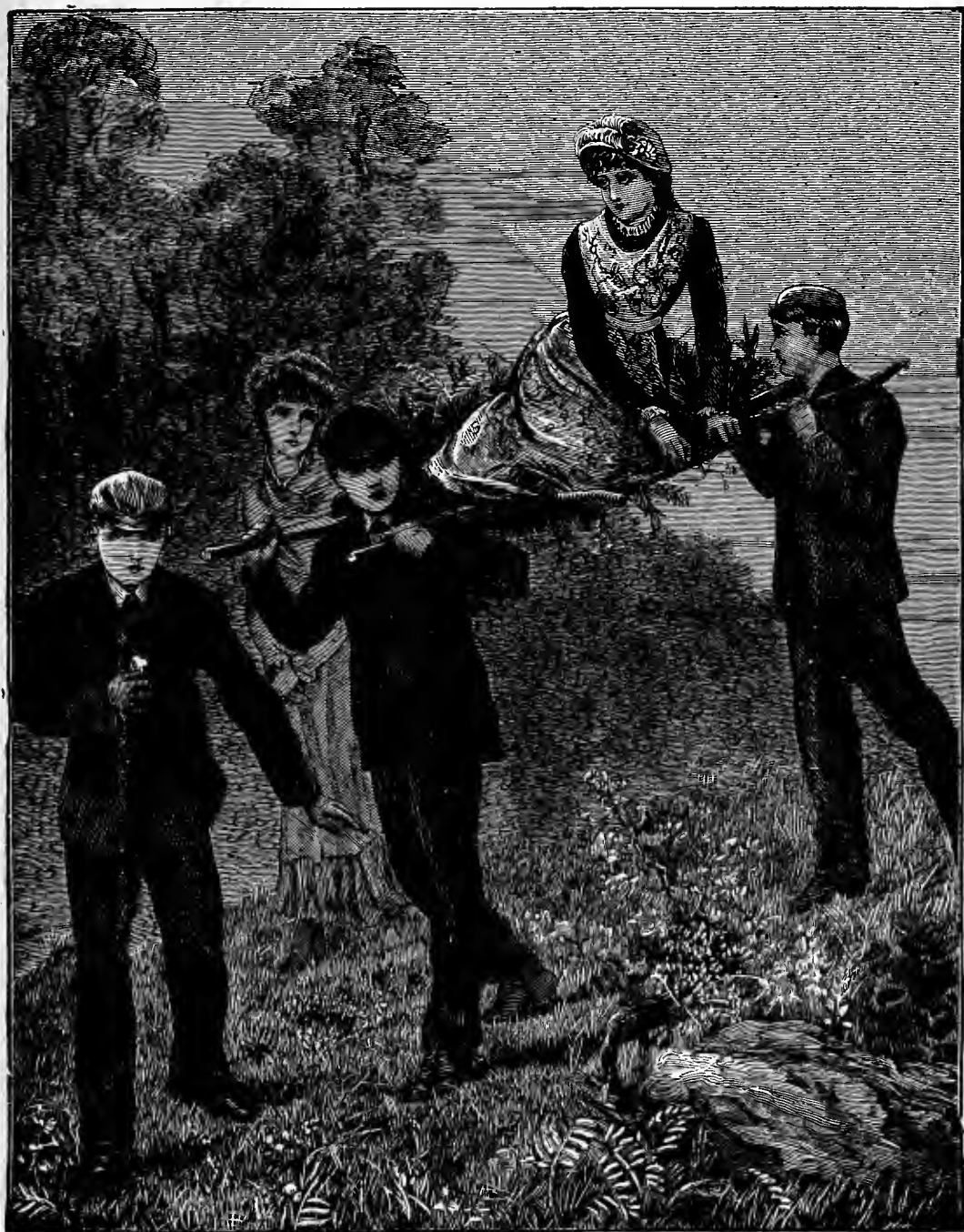
"No, my laddie! I fear you're out of practice. Only be wary where you step, and, if you're in trouble, call on me."

Similar conversations with Ellery and Clarence were had, unheard by Celia; but, as hours went by and not even a harmless, little, green snake, writhed along the grass, the young people forgot all about the pistol.

In the afternoon, a sudden tempest came up, or came *down*, rather, with all the energy for which Blue Hills' tempests are celebrated.

Before the girls could feel the rain through their light wraps, their cousins constructed a shelter-tent; and, when the storm was over and the pure air cooled to chilliness, they built a fire and had a merry time there. At last, night-fall and a rising wind warned them it was time to start for home. Prudent Celia suggested that the embers were quite too lively to be left; forest fires might result from this social little blaze. So the boys obediently stamped out the smouldering sparks. As Archer was vigorously stamping in a circle far enough away from the fire to be absurd, all suddenly held their breath at a sound,—strange, distinct, unmistakable! Junia's pistol was the instant echo of it—and the dreadful rattlesnake was dead.

It was all over so quickly that Celia and the boys



stood spell-bound, but Junia was beside herself with excitement. She continued to fire at the creature even when he was as helpless as a striped ribbon, and ended her onslaught by lodging her last charge in her ankle.

The heroine was suffering intensely, but her courage was good, and she gave off orders with military importance.

"Make a litter of our tent poles and boughs! Pile up the leaves and ferns for baggage! Archer and Clarence, you may take me home if you'll carry me high up on your shoulders where a snake can't get me. I'm defenceless now,—all but *you*," she added, with a fascinating smile to her bearers. "Ellery would better go ahead and see that the path is clear, and my little Celia shall walk beside me. Oh, but you all look scared out of your senses!"

In this style the autumn-leaf party returned to Eden. June forestalled any other account of the adventure by saying, "Forgive me, auntie. We can both say, 'I told you so.' A snake *did* come and I *did* shoot him. Now, for your satisfaction, I did disobey and did shoot myself."

A surgeon was called, and Junia was not an invalid for a very long time.

But though she was soon able to walk, the young people did not care to ramble among the rocky hills, and no more was seen of rattlesnakes or pistols that happy summer.

UNCLE ED. AND THE CHILDREN.



H, dear! I wish I had some choc'late camels," whined Pussie Parker.

Pussie was a girl and not a cat ; but no cat could howl more dismally than Pussie, when she gave her mind to it. As nobody paid any attention to her request, she repeated it with a doleful drawl on the "ca—mels."

Uncle Ed. put down his newspaper. "Camels? What do you want camels for?"

"*Car-a-mels*," explained Nell, Pussie's older sister.

"Oh, that indeed!" said the pleasantest uncle you ever heard of. "But you know chocolate candies don't grow here in Waterbrook. See how golden the sunset is and how the evergreens stand against it as plain as soldiers? That's a sign Jack Frost will be around with his silver key to-night to unlock the chestnuts. If he does, we will go nutting to-morrow, and have more fun than you could pack in twenty pounds of 'camels.'"

The next morning, as soon as the sun had taken the chill off the woods and fields, a merry party set forth for chestnuts.

Uncle Ed. started off on a race, Don and Will doing their best to keep up with him. But he reached the woods time enough to repeat most of the "Death of the Flowers" before the others came. He had just got to the lines,—

"The sound of dropping nuts is heard
'Tho' all the woods are still," . . .
"But suddenly the leaves are stirred,
By Nellie, Don and Will,"

he added, in words that Bryant never thought of.

Pussie looked injured for a moment, because her name was not brought in, but soon forgot the slight in her scramble for the nuts.

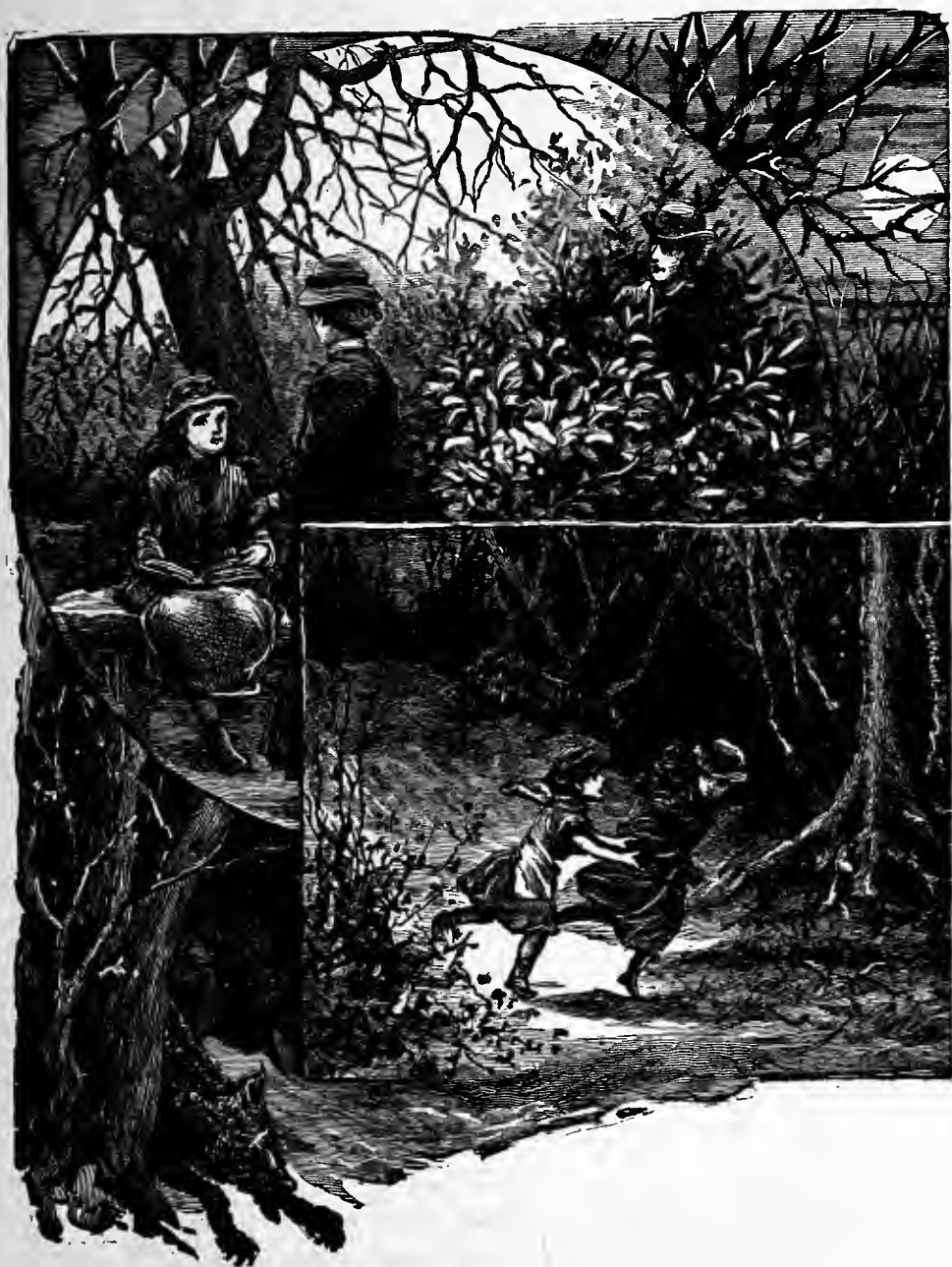
The dear little red squirrels were not afraid of the jocund party and gathered their nuts, too, enjoying the fun as well as the children.

At last, having filled their baskets, they found a smooth rock for a table and spread their lunch,—chicken sandwiches, Baltimore biscuits, apple tarts, and milk, with a dessert of chestnuts.

"And, now for a story," begged the children.

"Oh, let me out! I want to go home!" pleaded Uncle Ed., pretending to be in a great hurry to set off. "I don't know any stories,—forgot all I ever heard."

"But tell when you were a little boy,—something



awful and nice," said Will. "Didn't you ever get drowned or burned or something?"

"No,—let's talk about chestnuts."

"Oh, we know all about chestnuts," cried the children.

"Do you know what the poor people in the south of Europe do with them? They grind them into meal and make bread and pudding out of it.

"There's a big chestnut tree on Mount Etna that would take sixty-five of a man's steps to go around it. Do you know how many feet that would be, Will?"

"That would depend upon the size of the man's feet," answered the laughing boy. "If it were old David Buzbee, I should say about five feet.

"Say, do roasted chestnuts grow on that Mount Etna tree?"

"They might be easily roasted there, I should think," said Uncle Ed.

"But, uncle," said young Don, who did not value any amount of useful information beside a good story, "do tell us something that happened to you when you were scared and finally came out all right."

"Let me see. Yes, I remember one time when I was all that, but it isn't any kind of a story.

"When I was a young clerk in a flour-store in Boston, I was sent late one afternoon to a big warehouse to compare samples with the flour stored in the loft. I had a lot of that sort of work to do and was busy as a bee in a clover lot."

"Did you have to unhead all the barrels, uncle?" asked Nellie.

"Oh, no! I removed the bung, took out a small quantity of flour with the trier, as that tool is called, compared it with sample, then made all tight again and tried another, and so on.

"All at once, an unpleasant feeling came over me, like the small shock one feels when a clock stops. You know the sudden silence feels awful. Well, this sensation was like that, only more so a good deal. I pulled out my watch and was astonished to find how late it was. Twilight lingers in lofts, you know, long after parlors and show-windows are dark.

"I rushed down stairs. Oh, but it was a gloomy old place. I kicked at the doors, pounded at the windows, screamed and halloed."

"Oh — dear — me!" whined Pussie, "couldn't you ever get out?"

"No, I'm in there yet!" laughed Uncle Ed.

"Of course you got out," pouted Pussie. "Please tell on."

"It was useless, of course, to make any further attempt down stairs, for the windows were covered with shutters — Easy, boys!" cautioned Uncle Ed., interrupting himself. "Guess you'd better not creep out any farther on that bough."

"Beg pardon," said Will. "We thought we could hear you a little better up in the gallery."

"Well, up stairs then I went, made out to raise a window, and there I yelled to the crowd below. But it was a street that had a great deal of heavy teaming on it, and my voice made no more impression upon them than a mosquito.

"Didn't I wish *I* was one of that happy crowd, hurrying home to a Saturday-night supper of baked beans! I waved my hat, swung my arms, and at last I attracted the attention of a teamster who was trying 'to see the new moon over his right shoulder.'

"He couldn't hear a word I said, but the good fellow reined up his horses, gave them in charge of a boy, and when I had made him understand my situation, he brought a painter's ladder."

"And so *that's* how you got out, Uncle Ed.," piped Pussie.

"Not just yet, my dear. The ladder was too short. But there was an iron bar protruding (which is to say, sticking out, my child) below the attic window, just within my reach. The teamster urged me to touch this bar with my feet while I held on to the window-seat; then, by means of another bar, which upheld this first one, I was to edge cautiously down, grasp the longer bar with my hands, and when the teamster said '*drop*,' I was to touch the upper round of the ladder, and so descend.

"So, out of the awfully high window crept your uncle, and hung from the stout, iron bar.

“‘*Drop!*’ called the teamster—”

Bump! Crash! *This* was not in Uncle Ed.’s story. The boys,—Don and Will,—had unthinkingly gone a little too far on their “gallery,” and down they came; striking illustrations of the crisis of their uncle’s word.

A pretty serious illustration it proved. Will had sprained his ankle badly—perhaps broken it. At any rate, he was unable to walk or stand.

Uncle Ed.’s story was forgotten for the time being.

“I declare; that’s too bad!” said the kind uncle, “but I can carry you home pick-a-back easier than not, and we’ll soon have you all right again.”

“Oh, dear!” wailed fretful Pussie, “you promised to carry *me* home ‘pig back,’ and I’m so tired. I’ll have heart disease or hip complaint, I don’t know which.”

“She is really delicate,” whispered sweet sister Nellie to Uncle Ed. “How can we manage?”

“Don, my boy, will you wait here with little cousin till I can get back? Now, I’ll bear off the wounded, and Nellie can be ‘the daughter of the regiment’ and go with us.”

Don would far rather have been the one to go with his beloved Will. He never was fond of the fussy little Puss, but when the interesting part of the company were gone, and the pale little girl, quite tired out, sank to sleep upon the grass, Don felt nothing but pity for the child, and supported her kindly while she slept.

Fortunately, the day grew warmer toward sunset, or this out-of-doors nap would have been sure to make little Pussie ill. She had been sleeping half-an-hour, perhaps, when Don heard slow steps among the bushes. He could see no one, and judged, naturally enough, that some wild animal might be there.

Just as his boyish heart was leaping as valiantly as any full-grown hero's, there rose up from the bushes the well-known face of the village schoolmaster.

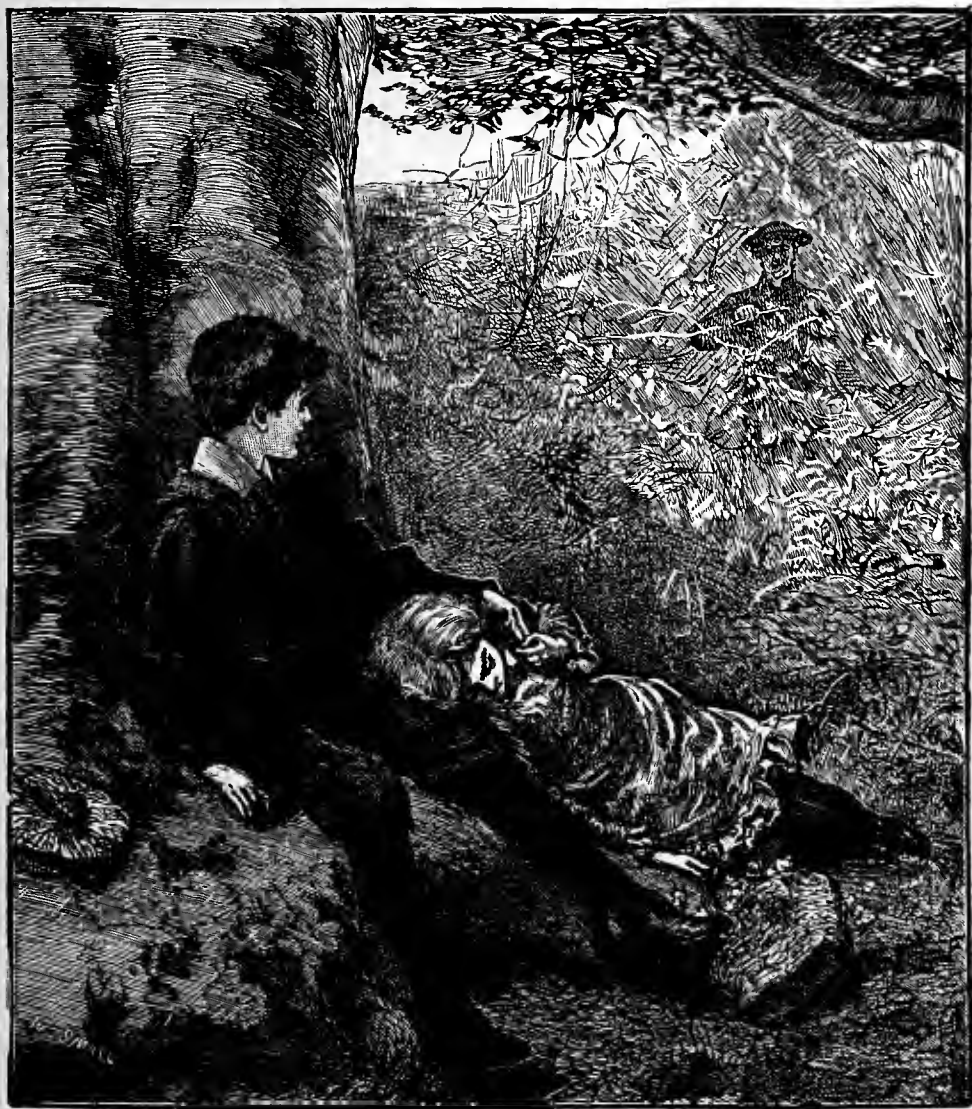
The good man had indeed been creeping about under the bushes like a wolf for his prey. He was a learned botanist, and had found there a root of a rare yellow trillium, which he was digging up.

He carried little Pussie home in his arms, and was glad, as was Don, to find that Will's ankle was not injured so severely as they had feared.

"Oh, Uncle Ed.!" exclaimed Will. "I beg your pardon. There you've been hanging from that iron bar for hours. Did you hit the ladder or come down on the teamster's head?"

"Hit the ladder, of course! I didn't come down the style you and Don did out of that chestnut tree.

"And now, for the moral. (Good stories always have a moral.) Don't be hankering after wonderful adventures; for, while it is true that 'strange things happen most years,' as the Dutchman said, it is generally the case that strange things *don't* happen; peace and quietness are the usual daily portion of our lot."



"All very well for *you* to say, Uncle Ed.," said Will, "but for the most of us boys, if nothing alarming happened, we'd *make* it happen!"

"So I thought," said their uncle, "when you came down upon me out of that chestnut tree."

GOOD FOR EVIL.



THE little town of Benjamin was sleeping in the sunshine. To all appearance, everything out of doors had come to a stand-still. The post-office was open, but it was yet three hours of mail time, and the postmaster was dozing in his chair. The grocery store had not a customer; the dry goods merchant was lying on his counter, "asleep with one eye and awake with the other." A drowsy murmur, much like the sound of bees, stole from the school-house windows. Blinds were closed throughout the village homes, to keep out the glaring heat. Sweet June roses drooped their tired heads; lilies-of-the-valley slept in their green hammocks.

The only out-doors person to be seen just at quarter past two, was little Elsie Hallowell, sliding down the

outside cellar doors. It was always a cool place there summer afternoons, and especially charming to Elsie, because her older sisters had forbidden her sliding there.

Those big sisters, after a busy morning in the kitchen were taking a nap, that they might be fresh later in the day, for they had invited the Sunday-school teachers to tea.

A tempting glimpse Elsie had into the buttery window, where, behind the wire screen were slender glasses filled with delicate "floating islands," and amid this archipelago stood a fruit dish made of fresh lettuce-leaves and heaped with strawberries.

As Elsie stood on tip-toe, looking at the pleasant sight, a gruff voice said, —

"Go in and ask the folks to give us some dinner."

Elsie was as accustomed to the sight of tramps as she was to mosquitos, and thought that both were a part of summer weather, so she answered readily, as she had often heard Biddy, the kitchen girl, reply to like requests, —

"Pump fifteen minutes for a cold bite, or half an hour for something warm."

The men laughed and looked at the pantry window.

"Get something easier than that!" said one. "Heard about the old Squire's force-pump and how the women folks keep the tank full. So this is the place!"

They did not waste any more time talking, but quickly cutting the screen bars, they clutched the novel fruit-basket; and reaching farther under covers, they seized a boiled ham, loaves of milk-yeast bread, delicate plates of tarts and various kinds of cake, which good Misses Sarah and Lydia had prepared for the teachers.

"We'll leave the custard for you, my dear," said the ugliest-looking tramp, "'coz that don't pack good."

Elsie was not frightened, but she was too astonished to move till the men were off. Then she trotted through the kitchen-door, along the entry and up to her sisters' room.

Miss Sarah always claimed that she never let go her cares, even in sleep; and, as Elsie opened the door she was murmuring: "don't leave the buttery open — a fly might get in."

"They — *did* — get — in, — two — of — them," panted Elsie, "and the supper is all gone!"

This bad news was enough to discourage tired housekeepers, but Miss Sarah and Miss Lydia were too brave to 'give up at anything.'

Their own mother had died when they were women grown, and for years they had comforted and managed their somewhat difficult old father.

He shocked them one day by bringing home a new wife, a silly young thing who wanted money to dress with, more than any other good in this world.

She had her wish for two or three years and then died, leaving little Elsie to tax the patience, and win the love, too, of her faithful step-sisters.

Not a word of blame did they give the sorry little girl now, but hastened to the kitchen to prepare another supper, thankful that the tramps did not steal Elsie along with the other good things. And, after all, when the company sat down in the cool supper-room to delicate muffins, just-picked strawberries, spicy seed-cakes, tall glass pitchers of cream and fragrant coffee, they were not disposed to grumble.

The next day, the two sisters, leaving Elsie with a neighbor, set off for a row down river. They were capital oarswomen, and were at home in a boat, no matter what the weather might be.

The very warm weather, which had glared like a blaze for two or three days, was smouldering now like a stifled fire, and a dull feeling was in the air.

As the young women rowed steadily homeward they did not like the greenish tint of the gathering clouds.

Suddenly, there was a thunder-clap, coming after a zigzag dance of lightning, and then wind and rain were let loose. The shade hats which Miss Sarah and Miss Lydia wore on their rowing-trips, were whisked away like autumn leaves, and if the young women themselves had been as slight as some young women, they might have been blown after their hats.

But the Hallowell family were all of substantial

build, and though there was for some minutes a fury of tempest, the boat was well managed and no harm came to it or its owners. All boats on that lively river were not so lucky. When the darkness of the storm was over and the blue sky smiled as sweetly as if it had never frowned, Miss Sarah was the first to spy an upset boat with two men clinging to it.

They looked in desperate plight, as indeed they were.

Their boat had been struck by lightning and capsized in the gale. They were almost stunned by the shock and were not able to swim or to manage the boat.

It was all that the brave women could do to land their pitiful passengers. Miss Lydia left them with her sister on the shore and went home for help. As they neared the house, the men seemed much disturbed and begged not to be taken in there. It was thought that they were wandering in their minds.

Little Elsie suddenly appeared and knew them for the tramps that had stolen the company's supper.

"I wouldn't do another hand's turn for the scamps," advised a neighbor.

The good sisters were not the persons to take that sort of advice. The men were taken into the house and well cared for. When they were able to work, they found employment in Squire Hallowell's felt factory in the next village, and became faithful men. "Treat folks as we were treated," said the grateful fellows, "and it's enough to save tramps from being scamps."



LOLA.



TIDY little street crossed from one thoroughfare to another, in the crowded city.

Behind the shaded windows of one tenement sat Lola Junkins, a pretty child about eight years old. She had brown eyes, with soft, dark lashes that touched her pink cheeks as she sat there reading. Her hair was brown and curly, her features delicate and sweet — altogether she was quite a little beauty.

She was reading a wonderful story all about a little girl named "Leafy Lonely," who was stolen from her high-born parents in England, smuggled across seas and passed off as a rag-picker's daughter, in a great city.

At last she had yearnings for a better home, and, believing that she would find it, ran away from the bad people who pretended to be her parents; and after many adventures wandered to a wood. When almost ready to die of despair, — in the language of the book, — "the clear ring of a horse's hoof was heard, then a company of horsemen, escorting a lady of high degree, with her attendant maids. Leafy



C. M. Berwick
1880

Lonely knew her at once as her long-lost mother, and the mother knew her child!"

Then followed a delicious description of lunch at the castle, and the little reader, at that moment breathing a whiff of broiled mackerel, — she disliked mackerel! — frowned and wished she were the lucky child in the story.

"And who knows," thought she, with kindling hopes, "but *I* may be a lost child? *I've* had 'yearnings' — yes, indeed, I should think so! This home does not satisfy me. I mean to ask *Mrs. Funkins* (as she now was inclined to call her mother) a few questions."

Out to the kitchen she dashed, where a tired-looking woman was getting dinner, helped and hindered by children of various ages.

"*Mrs. Funkins*, I would like to know who named me."

"Who named you! Why, your mamma did."

"So I thought! Was that *her* name?"

"What possesses you, Lola! You know Mary Jane was named for me. I called you 'Lola' just for fancy. I liked the name. But now, do please take Charlie, he clings to me so that I can't move a step."

Lola did as she was bid, noticing as she coaxed the little boy out of the room, that his eyes were blue, as well as Mary Jane's, Anna's, Eben's and Jack's, — another proof that her brown eyes belonged somewhere else!

Papa Junkins' quick step was now heard, and in he came, cheerily remarking that "dinner smells good to a hungry carpenter."

The demands of the dinner-hour now took up the attention of good Mr. and Mrs. Junkins, and as it was no unusual thing for little Lola to taste daintily, not to say disdainfully, of her dinner, and ask to be excused, they thought it not strange that she should return to her book. Lola read again the joyful meeting of the little heroine with her mamma,—the Lady Ethel. She quite fancied the name and hoped it would prove to be *her* mamma's. But it was high time she should set forth on her travels. So full of adventure was she, that not a farewell word or look did she give to the loving circle in the dining-room.

She put on her brown hat, buttoned up her neat little sacque over her pretty blue gingham, and ran up the street. She had an idea that she must find a ship the first thing; and fancying that any broad street would end in a wharf, she travelled boldly ahead.

She was an active little girl and used to walking long distances to school and church. But after a long, long walk, even for Lola, no wharf or ship appeared.

She had, in fact, taken a bee line directly away from the water, and it had led her into one of the loveliest suburbs of the city. So perfect were the bright lawns and blossoming fruit-trees on this May day, that Lola changed her plan and decided not to take a voyage in

search of 'a lady of high degree,' but to seek her lost parent on American soil and in some one of these lovely country-seats.

It was perplexing to choose among so many charming homes; but a fountain suddenly throwing its sparkling mist over turf and tulips, before a fine large mansion, decided the question. She tripped blissfully through the shaded entrance and passed, like one in a dream, along the winding drive to the front door. The name on the silver plate was satisfactory,—"Lemont." She said it over to herself, "'Lola Lemont;'" that sounds as pretty as 'Leafy Lonely.'"

Her vigorous pull at the bell brought a smart parlor-maid, who hesitated about troubling the lady to come down to see a stranger-child.

"She's not a beggar, ma'am, I'm sure," explained Hannah, "but she says she has special business with you. She's dressed plain, but as neat as a pink and as pretty as a rose."

Mrs. Lemont was a tall, dignified-looking lady; and somehow, as she entered the parlor, Lola did not feel like saying, "Oh, my dear mamma! have I found you at last!" She only faltered, "Have—you—lost—a—child?"

The lady's eyes filled with tears. She bent forward and kissed the child's flushed cheeks.

"*Somebody* has lost a child, I am afraid, my dear. Why did you run away?"

"I thought my mamma lived here," said Lola, "but if you are not the one, I must look further."

"*If I am not the one,*" repeated the puzzled lady, "don't you know your mamma when you see her."

Lola then told the story of her hopes for "something better than she had known," but so afraid was she of being sent back to "the common people that she had been taught were her parents," that Mrs. Lemont could not find out who they were nor where they lived.

After an elegant dinner, which the child enjoyed greatly, Mrs. Lemont told her she would show her to her room. It was Mr. Lemont's suggestion. "She has been well brought up," he said to his wife, "and I fancy that prayer-time will soften her heart and she will tell who she is. If not, I will then telegraph to the chief of police, for hearts are aching somewhere over this naughty little runaway."

Lola made no objection to going to bed. She was very tired, and then she was curious to see her room.

Mrs. Lemont led the way to a handsomely furnished room, with a bedstead which Lola thought was "as big as a chapel." It was indeed very different from the little white cot-bed at home, where she slept beside her sister. She thought, for the first time, how lonely her pillow would seem to-night. She wondered if they would miss her. Who would amuse Charlie-boy? who would go for the yeast?

These homely recollections, quite unbefitting a person of noble birth, brought tears to the eyes of the little girl. Mrs. Lemont unlocked a bureau and took out a little night-dress. "This," said she, "used to be my poor little Ida's, but you may wear it to-night. First, though, you may say your prayer. I suppose you know 'Now I lay me —'"

"Yes, — ma'am, — but mamma lets me say 'the Lamb' prayer;" and, with a sob in her voice, poor Lola began:—

"Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me!
Bless thy little lamb to-night:
Through the darkness be Thou near me—"

Lola could get no further.

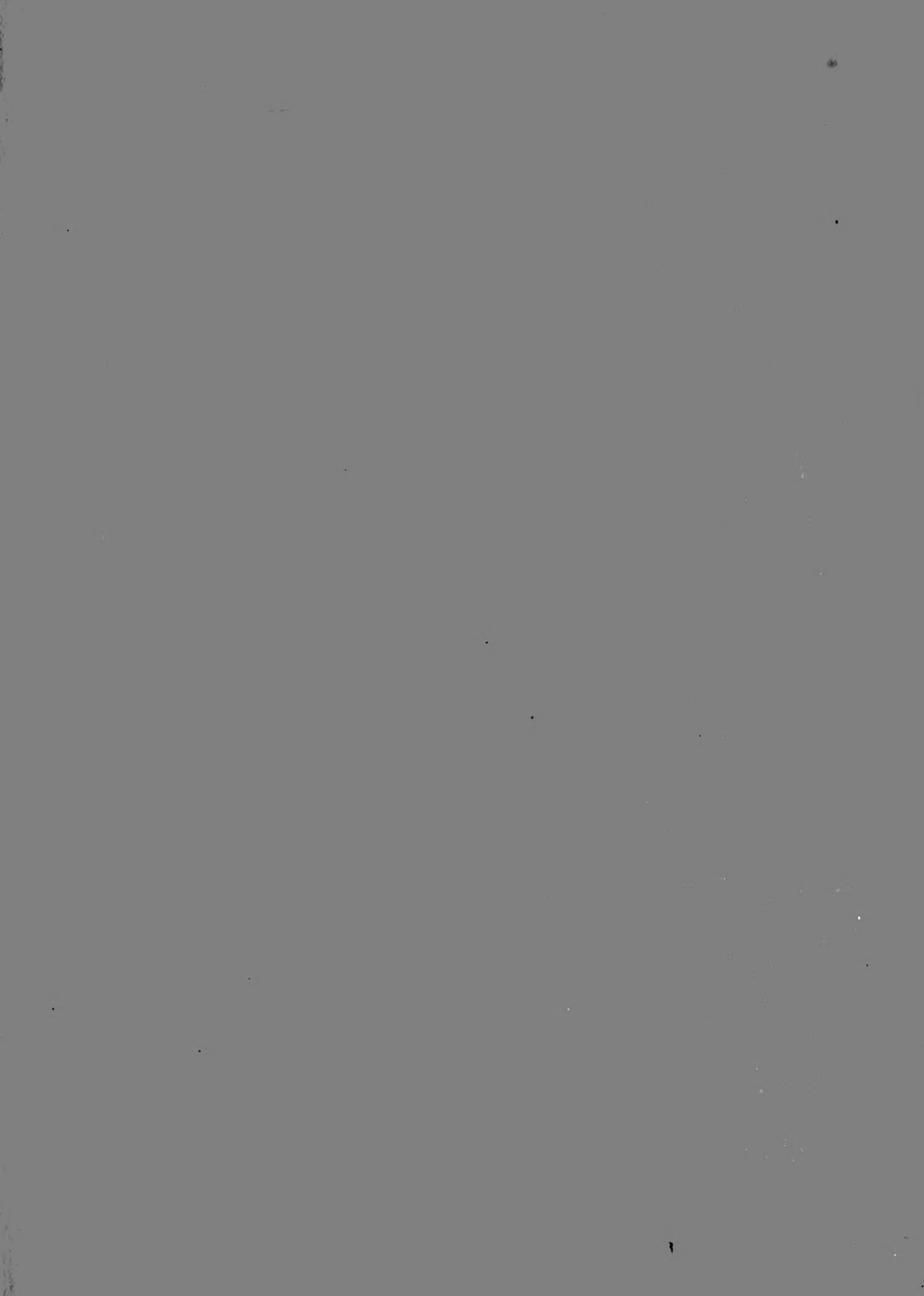
"Oh, Mrs. Lemont, — I want to go home! I don't believe I do belong anywhere else after all, — only I am a *great deal* commoner than they are, — I am not fit to belong to such dear, good people!"

"All ready?" asked Mr. Lemont's pleasant voice at the foot of the stairs. He was sure his plan would be successful. The memories of prayer-time were too much for the little misguided heart.

In a few minutes Mrs. Lemont came down with Lola, dressed for a drive, and in less than half an hour the fine carriage and horses of the Lemonts were in the city, stopping at No. 78, Quirlagig street, where the Junkins' lived. Lola was forgiven and received as joyfully as the prodigal son, and has never sought another mother.

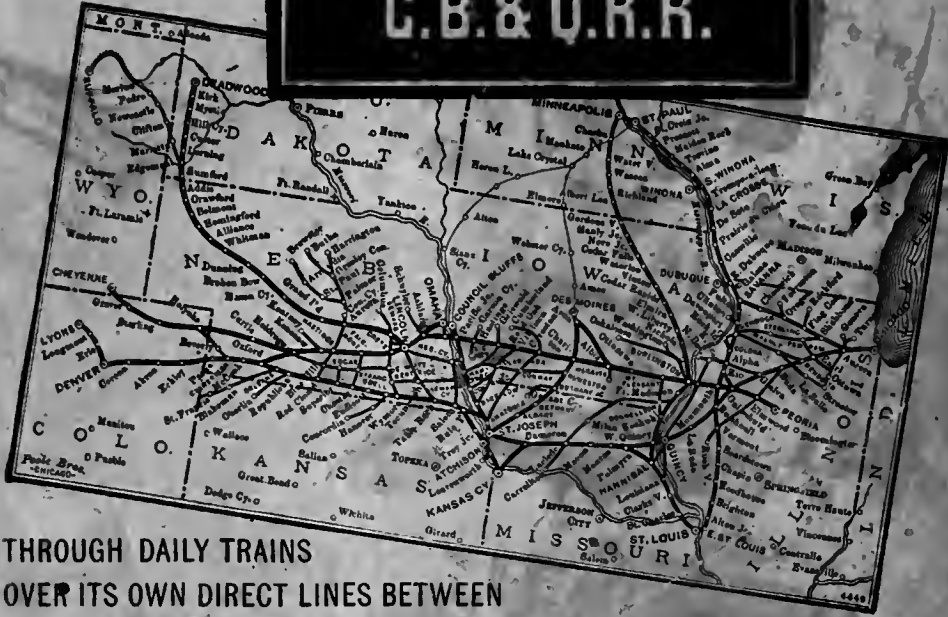






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